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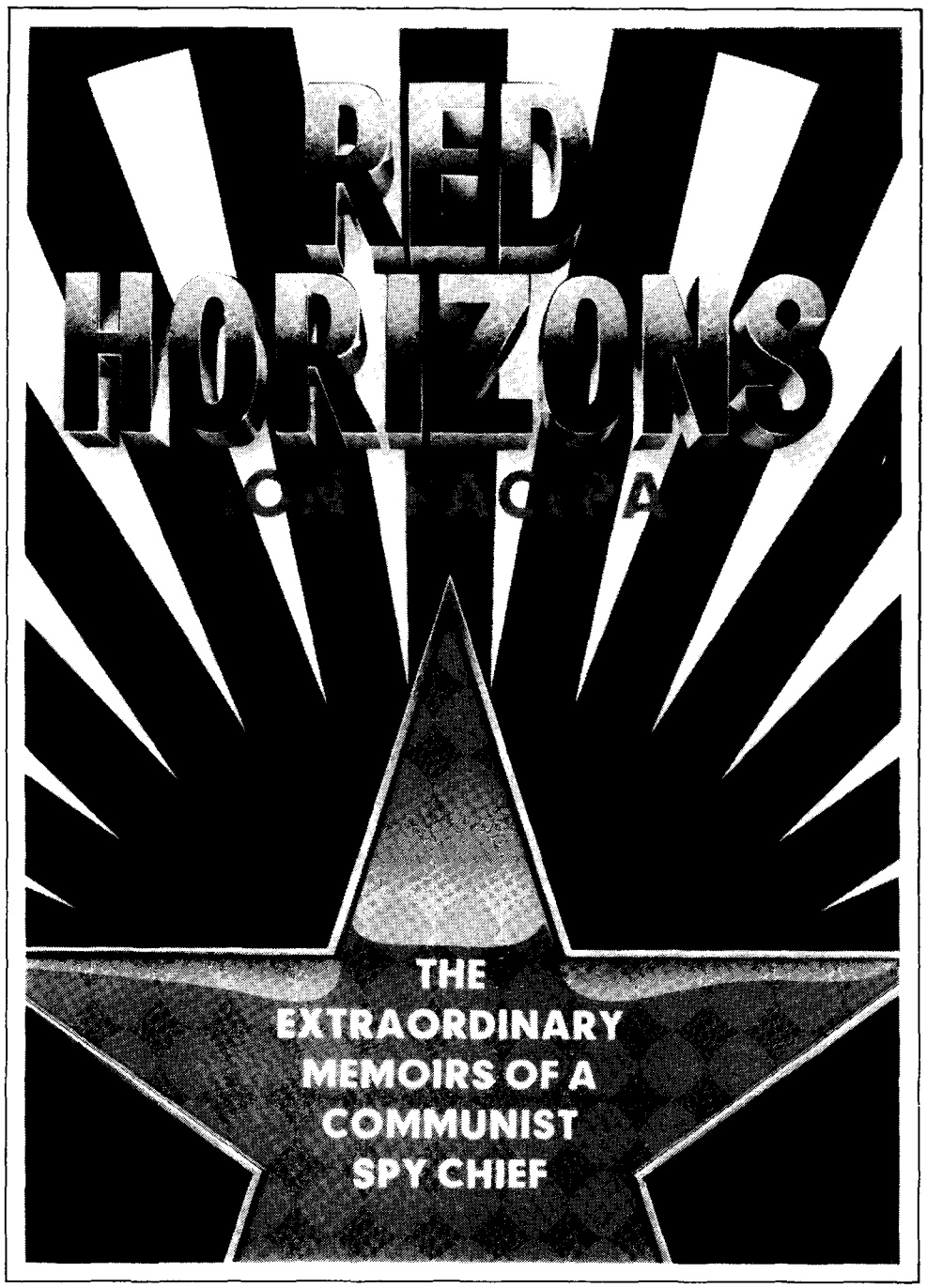


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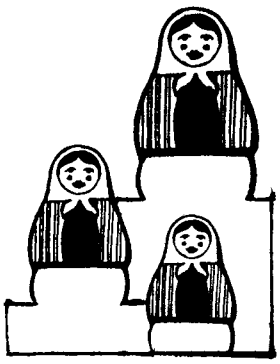
*Anthony Hartley*

# The "Cold War" for Beginners

## *Vices & Virtues of an Armed Truce*



IN THE FIRST VOLUME of Hugh Thomas's history of the Cold War,[1] a German Marxist, Eduard Bernstein, is given the credit for inventing this, by now, almost inevitable phrase. He was writing in the 1890s about the strains imposed on the international system by competitive armament, a striking example of which was shortly to be provided by the German Kaiser's decision to construct a high-seas fleet rivalling that of Britain. At this time the phrase, though well turned, did not take off; subsequently, it was revived by George Orwell in 1945, although it is attributed to Bernard Baruch and the year 1947 by at least one dictionary of quotations.

Whatever the history of the expression before the Second World War, there can be no question about its success since then. Despite George Kennan's disapproval, any newspaper reader will still find it in plentiful use today.[2] Its main function has been to describe relations between the Soviet Union and the United States and its allies, and the state of hostile indecisiveness in which these have continued over the post-War period. But it has also expanded into a metaphor for other deadlocked situations. For instance, a "Cold War" can be said to exist between Arthur Scargill and the National Coal Board, or between President Reagan and the Democrat majority in Congress. Lately, the expression has taken on a somewhat nostalgic tone. It seems to hark back to the days when things appear, in retrospect, to have been simpler (possibly because the complications have now been forgotten), to the creative moments of American foreign policy in the early 1950s or the vigorous tactics of the Kennedy Administration. The coinage "Cold Warrior" develops the same implications, and is much used in a pejorative sense by Left-wingers to describe those crude fellows who would actually wish to contain Soviet military expansion or resist Russia's acquisition of further Communist client states.

For the moment these subsidiary extensions of the phrase can be neglected. It is, however, worth while trying to define what is meant by a "Cold War" in terms of international relations, since—despite the amount that has been written about it—there is little clarity concerning its characteristics. Even George Kennan is not much help, since his remarks would lead to the conclusion that "Cold War" is simply the ordinary state of relations that prevails between the Soviet Union and countries brought into contact with it. Yet there is a perceptible difference between the situation after 1945 and that before.

A first short definition might be "a state of continuing hostility without the adversaries coming to blows". But this is too general. Two families living side by side and incensed by the activities of each other's dogs or children could also be said to be in a state of "Cold War", if that is all there is to it. Moreover, international "Cold War" has developed on occasion, in Korea or Viet Nam, into war pure and simple, though always through the persons of third parties ("proxies") rather than as a direct clash between the Soviet Union and the United States.

In the past there have been long periods of hostility between nation-states, brought about by geographical proximity and conflicting ambitions. For two centuries this was the case

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[1] Hugh Thomas, *Armed Truce: The Beginnings of the Cold War 1945-1946* (Hamish Hamilton, 1986), p. 550.

[2] Mr Kennan objects to the term on the grounds that there is nothing new or surprising about what it describes.

> ". . . I saw as the war approached its end, despite all the rosy pronouncements of President Roosevelt and others, no reason to expect or to hope that our relations with the Soviet régime would be any better after the war than they had been before—if anything, rather the contrary."

See *Witness to the Origins of the Cold War* (ed. Thomas T. Hammond, 1982), p. 29.



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with England and France. Throughout the 18th century the Anglo-French wars were conducted without much bitterness on either side; it was only during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars that the struggle was accompanied by hatred and desperation.

In the same way it has been the ideological content of the "Cold War" which has given it its special virulence. Communism has always claimed to be an ecumenical political creed, whose ultimate objective was a change in the nature of government and society, which its devotees regarded as inevitable and desirable. To hasten the judgments of history was the purpose of any convinced Communist, and this determination was expressed institutionally by the relationship to Soviet foreign policy of such agit-prop bodies as the Comintern and Cominform. In such a perspective, policies like "peaceful coexistence" or the "Popular Front" were tactical compromises which in no way changed the view of history held by Communist leaders, or the conclusions they drew from it in terms of foreign policy.

In a book published in 1939, Franz Borkenau writes of the subservience of international Communism to the needs of Russian foreign policy and of the consequences for other states.

> "The fact is that in many countries today Moscow disposes of forces strong enough to influence national policy, forces loyal and moderate as long as the policy of their respective countries suits Russia, but threatening wrecking and rebellion as soon as this is no longer the case. This may not matter very much in peaceful times but must matter enormously in moments of tension, when relatively small forces may upset the balance. . . ."[3]

Thus, non-Communist states found themselves faced, not merely by declared hostility on the part of Soviet official doctrine, but also by the existence within their borders of a body of true believers, whose loyalty was engaged to a foreign power and whose frequent concealment of their beliefs allowed them to indulge in activities ranging from espionage to the infiltration of political parties and bureaucracies.[4]

Faced by this ideological onslaught, which was backed (after 1945) by the vast panoply of Russian military power extending far into Central Europe, Western countries, led by the United States, began to counter Communism's intellectual offensive by a reaffirmation of their own liberal and democratic beliefs. This was the easier to do in that a political philosophy inherited from the Enlightenment and the almost uninterrupted success story of their history had imparted to the American people's devotion to political freedom and economic individualism an intensity hardly to be found (alas!) in a Western Europe battered by war and cynically accustomed to the reverses of history.

The United States, therefore, was able to react to the ideological pressure of Communism with an ecumenism of its own—all the more effective for being accompanied by overwhelming material success, visibly higher standards of living than those of other countries, and an uncontested lead in industrial technology. As time went by after the War, America proved rich enough and enlightened enough to spread these benefits to Western Europe and Japan—and to create, and preside over, a world economic system which benefited millions of people and gave the lie to Marxist theories about the "imminent collapse" of capitalism. Despite Lincoln Steffens, it was the inhabitants of the United States, and not those of Russia, who could claim to have seen a future that worked.

FOR THE RULERS of the Soviet Union this bourgeois counter-offensive presented a deadly threat. Not only did it contradict Marxist-Leninist doctrine but, as subsequently proved to be the case, the changes brought about by the advent of advanced industrial society could undermine the old social structures on which Marxist theories were based. The benefits—or bribes, as a convinced Communist would have put it—of a successful capitalism had a dissolving effect on the class-consciousness of the proletariat; and, to Moscow's alarm, even those who had known the benefits of Communism appeared likely to succumb to the temptations offered by "the American way of life". Stalin and his henchmen responded to this threat by a battening-down of ideological hatches and a determination that no citizen of a Communist state should be exposed to corruption by even hearing or reading about the marvels hidden in the cupboards of capitalism.

One consequence, therefore, of the ideological content of the Cold War was to raise the stakes in the contest. Victory or defeat implied a change of régime and of the structure of society in the country affected. A Communist *coup d'état* meant the elimination of the middle class and the end of Western-style parliamentary government. A Communist state relapsing into private enterprise, or declining the aid and counsel pressed upon it by the Soviet Union, would signal a reverse for Communism, presenting (for convinced Marxists) the distressing spectacle of history momentarily going backwards.

What was at issue in the Cold War was a particular way of life as well as a type of political organisation. The result of the contest would affect the comfort of individuals and the power

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[3] Franz Borkenau, *World Communism* (Ann Arbor ed., 1962), pp. 425-26. It is worth noting (p. 419) Borkenau's judgment on the Comintern, whose historian he was:

> "Thus, three periods can be clearly distinguished. During the first period the Comintern is mainly an instrument to bring about revolution. During the second period it is mainly an instrument in the Russian factional struggle. During the third period it is mainly an instrument of Russian foreign policy."

It was only in its final role that the writer regarded it as formidable. International Communism was chimerical until it became an agent of Russian foreign policy.

[4] The deliberate concealment of a believer's true opinions with the object of escaping persecution or exercising secret influence was a considerable political innovation and one which appears to have been due to the 10th-century Bogomil heretics in the Balkans.

Rather than testifying to their peculiar creed as previous heretics had done, thereby considerably simplifying the task of would-be persecutors, they denied it, and only an eavesdropping session organised by the Emperor Alexius Comnenus brought the heresy into the open. The novelty of this Bogomil invention has not been sufficiently appreciated.

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of political classes. No wonder that the hostility went beyond that engendered by a mere clash of national interests.

An historical parallel has often been drawn with the religious wars in the Europe of the 16th and 17th centuries. During that period, while there might officially be peace or a truce of exhaustion between Catholic and Protestant states or factions, in practice there was always conflict, open or clandestine. In time of peace Spanish shipping and possessions in America were raided by English seamen, while the Pope and the Guises were busy with plots to assassinate the Queen of England, and a *Te Deum* was sung in St Peter's for the massacre of St Bartholomew's day.

The difference between then and now was that the religious struggle could and did develop into declared war, culminating in the paroxysm of the Thirty Years War, whereas the invention of nuclear weapons, with their implication of mutual assured destruction, prevented any direct military struggle between the principal adversaries in the Cold War. Had these weapons not existed, then it is probable that war of a traditional kind would have broken out as a result of the competition between the Communist and non-Communist blocs. As it was, fear of a nuclear exchange imposed limits on the actions of the Soviet Union and the United States—though, at the same time, the existence of such weapons and the constant efforts to improve their performance increased mutual suspicion and put a premium on operations intended to secure accurate military and scientific information.

Ideology, of course, was not the only factor at work to gestate the Cold War. As Kennan also pointed out, the elimination of Germany as a major European power after 1945 destroyed the European balance of power, and produced a situation in which Russia became the naturally dominant state in the continent. To prevent the consequences of this, the United States had to maintain a presence in Western Europe. The North Atlantic Treaty was genuinely an occasion when the new world was called in to redress the balance of the old.

The post-War world very rapidly developed a closer network of international relationships than had existed before. Communications were quicker and easier; radio and television made people more aware of foreign countries. For better or for worse, nations were brought together; where hostility existed, it had a greater impact on public opinion. A clash of ideals or interests had a more immediate effect, and countries which had been described before the War as "far-off" no longer appeared so distant. "Interdependence" was an intensifier of even quite minor international irritations. A world that suddenly seemed more crowded distilled an atmosphere of foreboding.

Nor was ideology, as it developed on either side, an unmixed brew. The messianic messages of Great Russian nationalism blended with, and reinforced, those of Marxism. American policy was influenced by concern for commercial interests, and the Woodrow-Wilsonian view of international affairs held in Washington included a disapproval of colonial empires which was to prove highly inconvenient for some of America's allies. The Monroe Doctrine played its part in determining American reactions to Communist penetration into Latin America, while Russian expansion after 1945 fell naturally into patterns already established under the Czars. Personal rivalries and domestic political necessities, even sheer accident, also helped to decide the course taken by the Cold War.[5] None the less, the ideological character of the contest was decisive in creating its peculiar features: limited conflict and unlimited suspicion.

Though the actions of the antagonists might be restrained, their imaginations were not. Military aggression is something that can be perceived; it either takes place or it doesn't. But conflict, which largely excludes ordinary military operations, gives rise to as much fear of things that, on the surface, appear not to be happening as of those that are. Moreover, since it can never be proved that political subversion of a state's institutions is not taking place, and since it can be assumed that any adversary might find it desirable to undertake such operations, the suspicion that he is up to something undesirable can never be laid to rest.

[5] The same, of course, is true of the religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries. Religion did not always dominate men's minds. In his *Istoria delle Guerre Civili di Francia* (1630) Caterino Davila (an eyewitness of the religious wars in France) treats them as being almost entirely a faction struggle between the house of Bourbon and the Valois. According to Davila, the Huguenots were merely cultivated by the Bourbons because they were a powerful and cohesive body hostile to the Guises.


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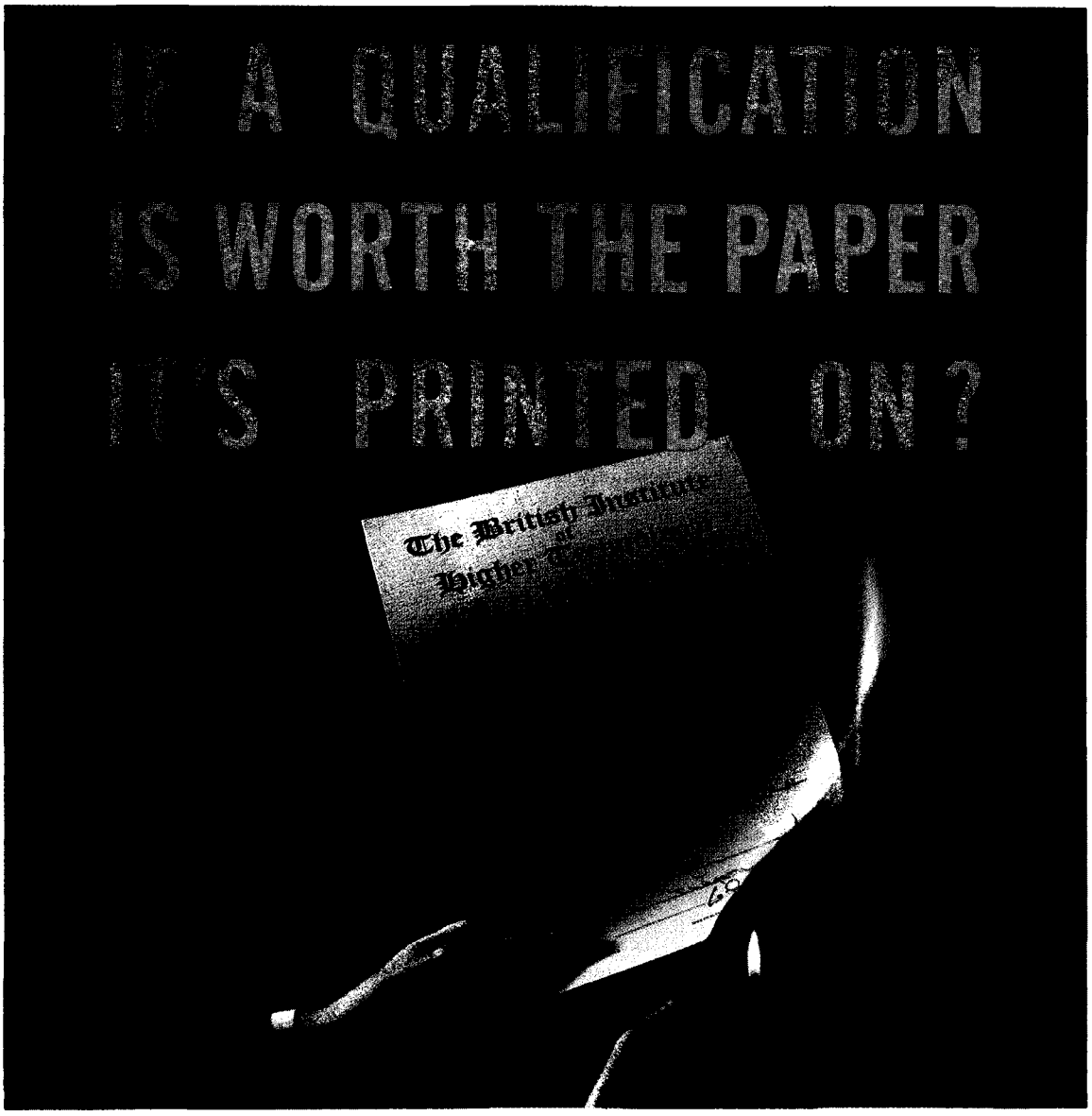


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In a Cold War much effort is spent on trying to penetrate the mystery that surrounds an opponent's possible covert operations. That mystery, felt as a psychological threat, produces a defensive suspicion as an allergen produces histamine in the bloodstream, and this, in turn, is experienced as a threat by the other side. A mild paranoia, therefore, comes to affect the state of mind of those statesmen, officials and military leaders who are involved in a Cold War. John le Carré, in one of his novels, has called this type of conflict "The Looking-Glass War", but these are mirrors blurred with mist, whose swirls are felt as all the more menacing for rarely revealing their secrets in an unambiguous form.[6]

However, this concentration on intelligence activities was not merely a Cold War ritual. There were genuine reasons for it. A situation in which two opponents are prevented from resorting to war by the very power of the nuclear weapons at their disposal can only be sustained if neither of them can obtain a decisive technical advantage over the other, which would disturb the existing balance. Peace must be preserved by constant preparation for war, and by the adaptation for military purposes of the rapidly changing technology of the late 20th century. To have some idea of what one's opponent is doing to improve his armaments is a vital requirement for either side. However, since the United States has a clear advance in technology over the Soviet Union, espionage must play a more important role in Russian calculations about national security than it does in American thinking.

The Soviet Union was well suited to any such competition in clandestine activities. Not only did it have at its disposal the Communist sympathisers described by Franz Borkenau, but the pall of secrecy and suspicion which has traditionally enveloped the decisions of government in Russia itself provided a defensive screen of redoubtable opacity.

In contrast, the open societies of the West found it hard to procure reliable information from within the Soviet Union or to detect the presence of Soviet agents in their midst. Since 1945 they have learned, but the price of the lesson has been the awakening of suspicion within their own societies. Indeed, it can be said that, during the years of the Cold War, Russia has imposed on Western societies something of its own secretiveness and paranoia. The so-called "Cold War atmosphere" was the communication to other countries of a distinctively Russian *penchant* for intrigue. This is the process that can be seen at work in Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907), an astonishingly prescient vision of what was to obsess the second half of the 20th century.

Fortunately, the results of this obsession have been limited. In Western countries civil liberties have been only marginally affected, even in the most intense periods of the Cold War, and the inconveniences and occasional personal injustices caused by "positive vetting" and other security measures must be regarded as resulting from defensive moves, made to counter a real threat. In the late 1960s, indeed, the concern for security was compounded by outbreaks of terrorism on the part of various extreme political splinter-groups whose existence had little to do with the Cold War, although some of them appear to have been supplied with arms and instruction by the Soviet Union or its allies—presumably on the general grounds of the desirability of trouble-making in Western countries. Without the Cold War it would certainly have been easier to round up such people, though no doubt they would still have found an hospitable reception in countries such as Iran or Libya. As it was, their existence added new pressures to an already charged international atmosphere.

THUS THE COLD WAR can be defined as motivated by a continuing hostility, whose content is ideological. Its psychological modes are mystery and suspicion, and its expression in action includes an aggressive diplomacy, military threats and a spectrum of covert operations. The framework is a military balance between the two superpowers which, at a later stage, became a form of complicity as the grim facts of nuclear warfare led to arms-control negotiations designed to avert the danger of any accidental outbreak of war and lessen the strain of competition in weapons technology.

TO DEFINE THE CONTEST in this way is not, of course, to assign responsibility for it equally between the Western powers and the Soviet Union. Hugh Thomas's excellent book covers in great detail the period during which Western attitudes towards Stalin's Russia changed decisively. He shows very clearly that, at the end of a war in which Britain and the United States had fought as allies of the Soviet Union, London and Washington were far from displaying any hostility towards that country.

On the contrary, what seems in retrospect an extraordinary optimism about post-War Soviet policy prevailed in high places. In Washington President Roosevelt's hope that America and Russia as "young powers" could get along together persisted well into 1946—the period when, as one comment put it: "Truman fiddles while Byrnes roams." American business-men shared the view expressed by *Fortune* magazine, that Russia could be "the richest potential export market for American industrial equipment and products in the immediate and future post-War period"—an early example of what was to be a recurrent delusion about the advantages of trade with the Soviet Union.

In Britain the Foreign Office envisaged a spheres-of-influence agreement with the Soviet Union (on the lines of Churchill's 1944 bargain with Stalin over the Balkans), while entertaining strange misconceptions about the nature of Russian Communist government. Lord Thomas quotes a memorandum from the Northern Department which reached

[6] The intense and somewhat morbid interest shown by the writing and reading public in Western Europe and the United States in the world of espionage and covert operations is a by-product of this situation. This is an area where conflict expresses itself in reality, and where national success or failure can be believed to be measured. Such writings, whether autobiographies, pure fiction, semi-fiction, or investigative reporting, have the same sort of hold over the public mind as the accounts of colonial wars did in the 19th century. In Britain, interest in such matters perceptibly diminished during the Falklands war—a far more dramatic representation of "the real thing".

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the conclusion that, whereas Stalin believed in collaboration with the West, he was opposed and hampered by a "dogmatic" faction in the Politburo. . . . Even as experienced an Ambassador as Clark Kerr could write in March 1945 that the Anglo-Soviet treaty would probably "pay a steady, though not spectacular, dividend. . . ."

Of course, both Britain and the United States were countries weary of war and faced with demands for a rapid demobilisation of their conscript armies. How much more comfortable to believe that understanding with the Soviet Union was possible! How much more convenient to neglect what was happening in Russian-occupied Eastern Europe! On this both idealists and cynics, from their different points of view, could agree.

But there were those who were more percipient. At the end of 1943 Charles Bohlen, then head of the Russian section of the State Department, made an accurate assessment of Soviet aims in post-War Europe: the division of Germany, the emasculation of French policy, the domination of Eastern Europe. He concluded:

> "The result would be that the Soviet Union would be the only important military and political force on the continent of Europe. The rest of Europe would be reduced to military and political impotence."[7]

By the end of 1945, Clement Attlee, then Prime Minister, also had few illusions about Soviet intentions, being particularly struck by what had been brought to light during the Canadian inquiry into the Gouzenko espionage case.

What finally produced a change in the minds of those who had striven to maintain their belief in the Soviet Union as a possible partner in a future world order was the brutality and duplicity displayed by Russia's representatives in those Eastern European countries which it was Stalin's intention to turn into client states. Assaults, kidnappings, and murder were used to get rid of political opponents and ensure victory for the "front" parties controlled by the local Communists.

> "I can report [wrote the American Ambassador to Bulgaria in early 1946] . . . that in fact there is today not a single member of staff, delegation and Mission who retains a shred of belief in Russian objectivity or good faith. They are the instruments of an implacable system that makes no allowances for human decency. . . ."

In the end, feelings such as these, held by growing numbers of officials who had actually been in contact with the Russians, were bound to have their effect on American and British policy, once they filtered through the official hierarchies into the higher reaches of government and political life.

The shock that Westerners felt at Russian behaviour in conquered territories symbolised an encounter between opposed historical traditions. When General Cortlandt Schuyler, the American representative on the Romanian armistice commission, went to ask his opposite number, General Ivan Susaikov, to join with him in an effort to relieve famine in Moldavia, he received the reply:

> "We have famine in Russia almost every year. The weak die and the strong survive. That is Nature's way. Besides these people were our enemies two years ago."[8]

To the Russian commander, General Schuyler's request must have appeared an absurd eccentricity. Already, in the mid-19th century, the consequences for human rights of Russian expansion had been noted by a British diplomat:

> "The Russian soldier is not contented with marching in a strait waistcoat. His knapsack is stuffed with spare ones for the accommodation of his foreign victims—partisans or opponents, as it may chance to be."[9]

Under Stalin these habitual ravages of a Russian army in the field were accompanied by a deliberate policy which brought about the decimation of peoples, the extermination of all possible opponents, and the looting of anything, from machinery to grain, that could possibly be of use to the Soviet Union.

Considering the way in which Stalin governed his own people, these measures must have appeared perfectly natural to him. It was none the less a major political error to display the brutality of Russian Communism in all its nakedness. In addition to the immediate impressions sustained by Allied officials and governments, public opinion in the West was deeply stirred as accounts of what was going on in Eastern Europe began to leak out through foreign correspondents and refugees. Among the motives which led the countries of Western Europe to join with America and Canada to form the Atlantic Alliance, the influence of sheer terror at the prospect of being subjected to the treatment of a Soviet satellite state must not be underestimated. The ruthlessness and disregard for international opinion with which Russian policy was conducted were frightening to those who became aware of them. The manner of Soviet expansion and the emotions it aroused in those who witnessed it helped to elicit from the Western Allies the defensive reaction that marked the beginning of the Cold War. This is something that "revisionist" historians have totally failed to perceive.

It is a major achievement of Hugh Thomas's authoritative account of the beginnings of the Cold War—and one which will, no doubt, be reinforced as he continues with later volumes—that the theories of the revisionists emerge completely discredited. The United States did not behave in a hostile manner towards the Soviet Union after the end of the War. There is no evidence of "American imperialism" being responsible for the Cold War. There is no evidence of any attempt on the part of the United States to exert "atomic blackmail" on Russia. Such theories, when they do not simply

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[7] Quoted in Vojtech Mastny, *Russia's Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare and the Politics of Communism, 1941-1945* (1979), p. 132. This book provides an instructive introduction to Lord Thomas's history.

[8] *Witnesses to the Origins of the Cold War*, p. 154.

[9] Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Life of Stratford Canning: Viscount Stratford de Radcliffe* (1888), vol. II, p. 357.

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reflect old American populist suspicions of capitalism, seem to stem from the atmosphere of the 1960s (when most of the studies and pamphlets in question were written) and from radical objections to American intervention in Viet Nam.[10] They are not supported by research and have little to do with the real situation of the world in 1945-46. As Lord Thomas writes:

> "There is no sign that Stalin wanted, or expected, to remain on friendly terms with the Western allies in peace as he had done in war; or, indeed, could have done, given his loyalties, career, and personality."

By March 1946, the limit of the present volume, the ruthlessness of Russia's determination to grab all the territorial and other advantages which its military strength allowed was beginning to produce a counter-reaction in Britain and the United States. The results of this were to be seen in Iran, where Persian resistance and American support brought about the first Soviet withdrawal from occupied territory. This victory for a policy of firmness did not go unremarked in Washington.

Even in the event of an opening of the Russian archives, it does not seem likely that Hugh Thomas's general view of the beginnings of the Cold War will be much modified. He has given his readers the material to agree or disagree with him, but the judgment of common sense is on his side. Of course, details may be refined and mysteries cleared up. One such mystery concerns the role played by Stalin's character in determining events. Would another Communist leader have displayed quite the same degree of paranoia and brutality? But perhaps paranoia was a state of mind required for survival in the practice of Soviet politics.

ONCE THE Soviet Union had thoroughly aroused the fears of Western countries, the innate characteristics of the Cold War took over. Kennan may well be right in believing that the United States adopted "too military" an approach to the problem; but political warfare, carried on in peacetime, poses particular problems for open societies, which, moreover, were constantly being distracted by the other issues—decolonisation, economic crisis, racial tensions—that a rapidly changing world history brought before them.

In fact, the Cold War has been punctuated by military episodes—Korea, Viet Nam, Malaya—which, because of their dramatic character, have tended to draw attention to the need for traditional armed strength. There have also been numerous lower-profile conflicts where the presence of a few trained troops, or a handful of advisers, proved decisive. The outcome of these episodes has been varied. In Korea the United States achieved its objectives; in Viet Nam it suffered a defeat which had a profound effect on American morale and, in particular, on the freedom of action allowed to the Executive Branch.

Over the last 40 years the shape of international affairs has changed: China has detached itself from the Soviet orbit; Japan and the European Community have emerged as economic power centres; America and Russia have negotiated. But suspicions are not easily laid to rest, and it has been a feature of relations between America and Russia that no sooner have these begun to improve than some Soviet action designed to preserve an inherently unstable system of client states—most recently the invasion of Afghanistan—has brought about a deterioration. Even Mr Gorbachov, by the manner of Boris Yeltsin's dismissal, has revived disagreeable memories of earlier purges, which will have their effect on how he and his foreign policy are perceived in the West.

IF MYSTERY and suspicion are the modes of Cold War, then it follows that it is not easy to see when or how this period of world history will come to an end. In the past there was always the possibility that it would explode into an open armed conflict, but this seems unlikely now, short of events getting wildly out of control.

Theoretically, the Cold War could also end through the abandonment, by one side or the other, of its characteristic ideology. In practice this must mean change in the Soviet Union, accompanied by a gradual fading of Communist doctrine and diminution of the role of the Party. For, short of a Latin-Americanisation of its political life, it seems excluded that the United States would ever turn its back on liberal democracy and a market economy. On the contrary, it seems plausible to imagine that the Soviet Communist Party might be weakened through economic failure and a series of palace revolutions. In that case, however, it might be surmised that the Red Army would have its word to say; and it is not obvious (to say the least) that any form of Russian Bonapartism would help to bring the Cold War to an end. An upheaval within the Soviet Union would have the immediate result of bringing about a dangerous international crisis, as the satellite states in Eastern Europe struggled to free themselves from Soviet domination—a development likely to provoke an answering outburst of Russian nationalism. A disordered government in Moscow could make miscalculations dangerous to itself and to others.

Nor can it be supposed that diplomatic exercises in "confidence-building" will do much towards ending the Cold War. Arms Control agreements can hardly be said to build confidence; in fact, the provisions they contain are based on a dark assumption of permanent mutual mistrust. It would not be necessary to undertake the laborious negotiation of such agreements, with all their detailed technical precautions, did

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[10] For instance, in his book *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959), William Appleman Williams portrays (p. 147) what he calls "open door expansion": "Americans also had come firmly to believe that their own prosperity and democracy depended upon the continued expansion of their economic system under the policy of the open door." Mr Williams regards the overseas expansion of the American economy as a continuation of the opportunities afforded by the Western frontier, which were now at an end. Free trade is for him a form of American imperialism.

To which one can only reply that the Marshall Plan was a little different from being occupied by the Red Army. These views have obvious connections with the populist myth of the activities of the "international trusts" and with the prejudices of American isolationists.

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that mistrust not exist. Arms Control can do something to alleviate the consequences of the Cold War; it can prevent environmental damage, relieve the economic strain of competitive armament, and create safeguards against any accidental outbreak of war. But it cannot remove the causes of mutual suspicion or reconcile two conflicting ideologies.

This type of complicity between the superpowers has stability as its aim, but it remains a stability within the framework of the Cold War. In a sense it is the perfection of Cold War, since it ensures the possibility of its continuance at an acceptable level of peril.

CONTRARY TO what is usually assumed, disarmament is a consequence of political agreement rather than its cause. Without any prior accord on specific political disputes, Arms Control, if realised prematurely, might have the result of upsetting that balance of military power which provides a limiting framework to hostility. Any treaty which brought about an imbalance of military power in Central Europe would intensify, rather than diminish, the psychological disquiet which distinguishes Cold War.

Something of this can be seen in the acute anxiety of America's European allies over the "Zero-option" agreement on Europe-based intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF). Confidence-building has its limits, even when it includes efforts to eliminate substantive clashes of interest between East and West. But superpower agreements that lack any specifically political element risk being, at best, a delusive foundation for confidence; at worst, a cause of dangerous confusion.

IF WE RETURN TO the historical analogy of the Wars of Religion, then it might be expected that we are in for a long-drawn-out resolution of the Cold War. It took nearly two centuries for the bitterness of the struggle between Protestant and Catholic to die, as men's minds were gradually affected by a rising tide of rationalism.

Indeed, in some areas conditions of religious civil war persisted into the polite 18th century. The terrible and dramatic struggle in the Cevennes between the forces of the French crown and the Protestant *Camisards* took place during its first decade. Soon, however, Voltaire's pen was to make persecution unfashionable—not something that a cultivated and aristocratic Abbé would wish to undertake. The foundations of religious intolerance were sapped, as the upper classes gave the example of scepticism. Religious zeal was replaced by good manners as a standard for behaviour, and dukes tolerated the frequently eccentric opinions of other dukes because of their social equality.

It is by some such exhaustion of the virus of belief that we might suppose the Cold War will be terminated, or at any rate drained of its passion—clashes of national interest, of course, will remain. The extinction of the messianic element of Soviet Communism and the evolution of Russia into a relatively more open society, albeit differing in its institutions from Western patterns of democracy, would lay to rest the suspicions entertained by the United States and its Allies. Since it was the Soviet Union's behaviour after 1945 which aroused this reaction, it is not unreasonable to believe that it is Moscow that must create the conditions for an end to the Cold War. The Soviet system must renounce the ecumenical claims which, in the past, have presented a threat to the societies of other countries. That, and only that, would be a true end to the Cold War.[11]

ARE SUCH developments likely to occur over the next ten or twenty years? Will the Soviet Union move towards a "late Victorian" frame of mind, where the language of its substitute religion is preserved but the passionate substance of belief lost?

Today in the Soviet Union, so we are told, it is possible to detect a cynicism of orthodoxy, where doctrine means little and privilege and patronage everything; but it would be premature to conclude that men whose minds were fashioned by Marxist-Leninist belief will easily lose their intellectual conditioned reflexes.

What is perhaps surprising is how quickly Russian Communism has lost its internationale of true believers—with far greater rapidity than past creeds. The able Western fanatics who were ready to serve it 40 years ago are no longer there. Misplaced idealism has poured itself into other moulds—from anarchism to animal liberation. As for the adventurers, André Malraux's "conquistadors" are no longer serving the Comintern or its successor; they are more likely to be sailing around the world single-handed or founding a multinational property-developing or public-relations company.

In the Soviet Union itself, patriotism remains a very strong cohesive force; but Russian foreign policy no longer has knaves up its sleeve in the shape of its idealistic agents. Soviet Communism, its seductive powers of attraction gone, can only penetrate other societies in isolated cases. Its military power is redoubtable; but for all its intrigues, its clandestine support for political splinter-groups, and its incessant efforts to learn other countries' secrets, it has ceased to be a movement capable of rallying widespread support to its banners. Too much of the truth about conditions in the Socialist Sixth of the World has leaked out for that to be possible any longer. Marxism, while still arousing some intellectual and academic interest, lost the practical battle of ideas years ago; and Communism is dying out as a faith that can move men.

[11] Its historical parallel can be found in the relations between the Ottoman Turks and their Christian neighbours for more than 200 years after the fall of Constantinople. Long periods of open war alternated with truces that were neither war nor peace. Such agreements did nothing to prevent the Turkish irregulars—the so-called *Renner und Brenner*—ravaging Styria or Carinthia, and carrying off thousands of the inhabitants into slavery.

This state of affairs came to an end after the siege of Vienna in 1683, when the decline of Turkish institutions and the failure of the Turks to maintain their technological superiority over their opponents led to a gradual reconquest of the Balkans by the Habsburgs. Nowadays, the possession of nuclear weapons excludes any such military reversal. But the economic decline of the Soviet Union may play its part in bringing about ideological change and damaging its capacity to continue a state of Cold War.

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# To The Finland Station?

HOUSE MAJORITY WHIP *Tony Coelho came out of the Congressional leadership's meeting with Gorbachov impressed. Impressed not just by Gorbachov's "tremendous confidence", "total command", and "comfort level", which reminded Coelho of "the kind of leader you had during World War II, but not since". (As it happens, the Russians had Stalin.) But also by Gorbachov's obvious sincerity.*

> **"The thing I liked about him is he's ethnic [explained Coelho]. He talks with his hands. When you do that you can't hide what you feel."**

*Reagan and Gorbachov had already announced that they had achieved "Call me Ron, Call me Mikhail" intimacy. The toiling masses of Washington's Connecticut Avenue, whom Gorbachov had left his limo to greet, found Gorbo so attractive they were ready to run him in the New Hampshire primary. Thomas Murphy, head of the ABC network, went them one better. He was so moved upon meeting Gorbachov that he told him, "If I were a Soviet citizen, I'd vote for you."*

A SUMMIT IS **by definition an exercise in equivalence. The language, the ceremony, the structure of a summit are all founded on the principle of symmetry. Moral equivalence follows easily. But this time the moral equivalence got out of hand. After meeting with Gorbachov, Alan Cranston took to the Senate's TV press gallery to give a detailed account of what Gorbachov had told congressional leaders. In total deadpan, Cranston quoted Gorbachov:**

> *"Secretary Dobrynin is now chairman of the foreign relations committee of our Supreme Soviet. They will be handling the ratification of the [INF] treaty."*

**Not a smile, not even a raised eyebrow, creased the face of the faithful rapporteur forced to repeat this droll pretension to American-style constitutionalism.**

FOR REAGAN, *moral equivalence is a form of politeness. A good host defers to his guest by denying the moral difference between them. For Gorbachov, moral equivalence is a programme. Georgi Arbatov explained it perfectly. It is the way—Gorbachov's "secret weapon"—to "deprive America of The Enemy". And without The Enemy America's military industrial complex grinds to a halt. All week long that was Gorbachov's theme: We are not enemies. We are brother earthlings facing, together, the real enemies: disease, pollution, ignorance, and, above all, nuclear weapons.*

*Call it park bench geopolitics: Reagan and Gorbachov sitting together looking out at the world. They are besieged. Their only hope is collaboration. Reagan had announced his receptivity to this idea at a previous summit when he suggested to Gorbachov that they both would set aside their differences rather quickly in the event of an invasion from outer space. Gorbachov overlooked Reagan's zany formulation and set about to exploit the sentiment behind this notion of superpower solidarity.*

*Park bench geopolitics goes much further than peaceful coexistence. It implies that the competition is over, that, once again as in World War II, we are allies against larger forces. It follows that the Cold War is over.*

IT WAS NOT **the fawning over Gorbachov's style and smile that made the week so appalling. America has long rewarded novelty and media presence with attention and admiration. Gorbachov sported a wife and a three-piece suit. Good reviews from the TV critics (Tom Shales: "You might not trust him, but you couldn't help but like him") were to be expected and discounted.**

**What was so appalling about the high that swept Washington during summit week was what it said about the seriousness and capacity for memory of American politics.**

**It is permitted to change your mind in politics. But you should at least give a reason. Reagan's reasons for his new view of Russia were ignorant and pathetic: Gorbachov is different from his predecessors because he does not seek expansion, because he is uniquely committed to disarmament, and (implicitly) because he gets on with Reagan. The President's excuse for losing his head is that it was never weighted down with too many ideas to begin with. Lightness is an extenuation of sorts. He has always been subject to powerful (and therefore potentially dangerous) simple notions, and now he's come up with a new one.**[1]

OVER THE LAST DECADE *a new realism about Soviet intentions has developed. It did not begin with the Reagan administration. It began with Jimmy Carter and the invasion of Afghanistan. (It might even be said that it began with Brezhnev and Soviet overreaching: in 1979 alone, their clients took power in Nicaragua, Cambodia, and Grenada, and they took Afghanistan themselves.) Carter's conversion was not bogus. His foreign policy after Afghanistan—Olympic boycott, grain embargo, harder line on El Salvador, projected increases in defence spending—was a significant departure.*

*Reagan did not invent the new realism about the Soviets. He rode it into office and then for seven years carefully nurtured it—with toughness at the negotiating table (to the point of braving a Soviet walkout on INF), a big defence buildup, and rhetorical boldness. He was not afraid to address the evil empire properly. Now it seems that Reagan too has overcome his "inordinate fear of communism" and in the course of a week seriously weakened the new consensus about Soviet intentions that had been building for a decade.*

THE ONLY PEOPLE **who seemed to keep their heads in all this were the Soviet delegation. The Soviets know what a summit is for and they remember what the Cold War is about. During summits they do their best to disguise this understanding, but occasionally it slips out. Dan Rather asked Arbatov whether the INF treaty might not ultimately lead to Western Europe being Finlandized. Finland? replied Arbatov. What's wrong with Finland? They have it pretty good.**

**Or as Gorbachov would put it: Finlandization is not a victory for one side or the other. It is a victory for common sense.**

*Charles Krauthammer*

*in* THE NEW REPUBLIC (*Washington, D.C.*)

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[1] *"The White House may be dreaming [writes Fred Barnes]. . . . Certainly Reagan was dreaming when he summed up his dealings with Gorbachov.*

> **'I find it's an entirely different relationship than I had with his predecessors.'**

*The difference is between something and nothing. Reagan never laid eyes on a single one of Gorbachov's predecessors."*

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With it will go the dynamism imparted by ideology to the state of affairs we call the Cold War.[12]

MEANWHILE, THAT CONTEST is still with us. Today and tomorrow soldiers will continue to plan, diplomats to exert pressure on other governments, and intelligence officers to gather information. These activities make up the history of the Cold War. They are the practical expression of the state of mind resulting from an ideological contest and the suspicion it engenders.

This muted, but apparently long-lived, hostility is frustrating for those who desire striking improvements in international relations; and it is an ungrateful task to point out to them that, on the whole, the world has prospered during the era of the Cold War. Even some poor countries have become richer; even citizens in Communist states have experienced some improvement in their condition. As far as Western countries are concerned, their resistance to Soviet political and ideological pressure has been largely successful. Only in those countries where, because of their past history, anti-colonial sentiment habitually prevails over common sense, is Marxism-Leninism still a tempting choice, and even there commitment to it is mostly confined to rhetoric.

The 70th anniversary of the October Revolution finds the Soviet Union falling behind the West economically; engaged in a costly and debilitating war in Afghanistan; committed to unreliable and expensive allies in Angola, Ethiopia, and Cuba; and unable to shake off the political burden of Stalin's inheritance. The possibilities for a reformer in Russia are limited today, as they were for a Speransky or a Loris-Melnikov under the Czars.

No doubt it is always a mistake to choose *le politique du pire*. We must hope that Mr Gorbachov will succeed in what appears to be an attempt to make the Soviet Union internally a more relaxed and successful country. In the 18th century, Montesquieu noted, "*La Moscovie voudrait descendre de son despotisme, et ne le peut. . . .*" No one can foresee what will happen in Russia over the next twenty years. There are intimations of change, but we cannot tell where they will lead or, indeed, whether they will lead anywhere. We cannot know when "the long winter of Russia's dark internal policy" (as Edward Garnett called it in 1895) will end.

If it does, then we must ask what new policy of the nationalities will satisfy the non-Great-Russians who at present form some 50% of the Soviet Union's population? This question must be a crucial one for the future of Russia—an obstacle to democracy and a potential source of disorder. A thaw in Russia may be as dramatic and dangerous as the cracking of the ice on its great rivers. Yet it is on this uncertain and perilous event that the future of Europe and the issue of the Cold War will depend.

NOTHING SHOULD LEAD US to think that living alongside Russia during a period of what may be prolonged domestic crisis will be easy or will much modify the need for the military precautions that have been taken by the Western Alliance over the past four decades.

It is easy enough to talk scornfully of "Cold Warriors" as if those who support the continuance of NATO were the aged babblers of *Dad's Army*; but to follow events in the Soviet Union attentively and prudently is the part of common sense. In the post-War international system which we call "interdependence", countries around the world are so linked one to another that their internal upheavals are never isolated, but produce almost instant repercussions elsewhere. This is "one world" felt as pain. Just as the trade and budgetary deficits of the United States have affected the world markets, perhaps for mainly psychological reasons, so crisis in the Soviet Union will be experienced as suspense and anxiety in other countries.

A lessening in intensity of such feelings will signal an approaching end to the Cold War. But we must not fabricate relaxation by repeating to ourselves that every day, in every way, things are getting better and better. In a recent lecture to his Centre for Policy Studies, Hugh Thomas gives good reasons for supposing that the Cold War continues and will continue until there are unmistakable symptoms of a fundamental change in Soviet policy.[13] The first volume of his history shows too how easy it is to be over-optimistic about Russian intentions. In the mid-1940s the West was faced with a threat brought about by Russian military power and an attitude towards other countries informed by an aggressive ideology. Now, it may be, we are entering an era in which we shall have to cope with the consequences of Russian confusions and uncertainties, and the unpredictable actions these may occasion. For that too we shall need strength and determination.

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[12] In a long essay in *The Atlantic Monthly* (November 1987) John Lewis Gaddis argues that the error made at Reykjavik was that President Reagan and Mr Gorbachov did not aim directly at ending the Cold War. It will be apparent that the view I take of this process is one in which exhaustion of belief plays a greater role than the negotiations of statesmen. We are dealing here with opposing (though unequal) psychological motivations which require time to lose their dynamic capacity.

Professor Gaddis also mentions the question of justice. He writes: "We also think of peace as consistent with justice." We? I doubt if this is true of any European, whatever may be the case in the United States. In fact, any stable international system is *always* unjust to someone. Just because it is fixed and unchanging, it deprives some small national group or other of hope for the future. Imagine an end to the Arab-Israeli war arranged on principles of abstract justice. . . .

But this is too much for even a powerful imagination. Injustice is all we can get out of any peace. That is the price we pay—or which others pay (and that makes it easier)—for international stability.

[13] Hugh Thomas, *The Cold War: Has it a Future?* (1987).

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# *Andrew Davies*

# *Early Bird & Smiley Face*

THIS STORY could have been about any of the families who stayed that year in English Alley at the Grande Métairie. The Grande Métairie is a four-star campsite in Brittany and we found ourselves in English Alley because we had all booked with the same English company. We lived in tents like little houses with two bedrooms, a living-room and a kitchen, a place to put the car, and a little square of garden at the back. The sun shone throughout the fortnight and the air was full of Ambre Solaire, coconut oil, Savlon, TCP, and the patient desperation of the English families.

It could have been about any of them: Topless, The Prat, In the Trade, Fatty Peugeot, or even one of the grey families without faces who disappeared all day and zipped their tent flaps early at night. There was desperation there too, in the obsessively hammered tent-pegs, the neat stacks of *Beanos* and Word Search books, the sad backs I stood behind while waiting for my turn to shave. Fatty Peugeot was fat and spent his days talking about the excellence of his Peugeot, though he never drove his family to the beach in it. In the Trade was in the trade; Nadine and Sharon dirtied different frilly dresses every day and had their legs smacked for it every evening. The Prat was a prat. He had a jolly red face and baggy shorts, and what he liked best was to hold his children upside down and shake them until their faces went purple and their francs showered on the dust. He thought that they enjoyed this as much as he did. Topless was called Topless because of his interest in topless beaches. He was a tall, fair, good-looking fellow with a slight pretty wife and two slight, pretty, little girls. 1976 was the year that Brittany began to go topless, and every day Topless dragged his family off to ever more remote and topless beaches on the Côte Sauvage, beaches you had to scramble down cliffs to; and every evening they returned, the wife wan and weary, the little girls tetchy with skinned knees from the cliff-scrambling, Topless grinning and prancy, but with an unsatisfied glitter in his light blue eyes, as if even more topless beaches lurked in the shimmering distance beyond the jagged rocks. Yes, it could well have been about Topless.

It couldn't be about us, of course. We are good at being a family. We nurse each other through with tolerance and shared jokes. We pick our own mussels off the rocks and cook them in Gros Plant, but we're not doctrinaire about it. We have our books to retreat into. We have irony. We have detachment. You have to take my word for this because I, after all, am telling this story. You have to look at things from our tent. You'll be all right there. Promise.

No, it's about Early Bird and Smiley Face, three tents along from us on the same side of the alley. Early Bird was called Early Bird because she always got up so early, and Smiley Face was called Smiley Face because he never smiled. My daughter made these names for them on the first day, before we knew their real names, but when we knew their real names we found it hard to remember them. I am glad that Lisa named them so quickly and so surely. I think it helped, later—a bit.

The first thing Early Bird did every morning was to put on her false eyelashes. She never seemed to wear any other make-up. Indeed, she was something of a scruff, with untidy dark curly hair, pale skin, cotton nightie tucked into blue jeans, bare feet with long dirty toes. She had a mouth that changed shape all the time, even when she wasn't talking, which she was, most of the time. Rather a beauty, in her way. I thought so. I liked to watch her in the mornings, throwing heaps of dirty clothes out of the tent, squatting on her heels in the dust to play five-stones with her children, pattering up and down the rows of tents with her pale dirty feet. She made it all seem a bit of a game. I thought so.

SMILEY FACE was not usually sighted before eleven, though he could be heard for an hour before that, snapping and growling at his children, trying to drive them out of the tent. Then he would emerge, a stocky olive-skinned scowling man with a neat brown moustache. He would set up a metal table on his little square of back garden, place a metal chair by its side, fetch a bottle of red wine and a glass, and start the day's drinking. "Unhurriedly, with a kind of controlled anger, Smiley Face begins the day's long punishment of the *Caves Cooperatives*." (From the notes I made at the time. I must have seen him as material even then. "Kind of controlled anger." I ask you.)

On the third morning Early Bird came to call. We



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were sitting having breakfast on the dusty patch at the front of our tent that we called the patio.

"Have you enrolled them in the Club Micky?" she said.

"Who?" my wife asked. Tom and Lisa looked up warily.

"The children. It's absolutely the answer. Activities all day, they learn French, it's really good value. Then you can . . .", she waved a thin pale arm in a way that suggested infinite possibilities . . . "hang loose. Whatever! Gosh, boiled eggs, you are organised!" She squatted on her heels in the dust and took a bite out of Lisa's banana. "Mm, lovely! Well, what about this Club Micky, then? Ours adore it, honestly!"

We have always been better than average at refusing the hard sell, but there was something difficult to resist about Early Bird, and something flattering in the way she had chosen us out of all the families in English Alley. After breakfast we crammed both sets of children into the car (Smiley Face, it was understood, would neither drive his car in the mornings nor surrender the keys) and drove down the bumpy track to the beach. Early Bird and Smiley Face had three children. James, in shock from his first term at boarding school, his gentle face numb and tense with the effort to get things right. And Chloe and Ruth, wild little scruffs like their mother.

"Feet out the window, everybody!" yelled Ruth forcefully, and Early Bird and her daughters thrust their pale feet and dirty toes out of the windows, while James sat with his fists clenched between his knees, catatonic with embarrassment.

"You are wet, James", said Chloe.

"Man put his feet out the window!" shouted Ruth.

"Man's driving, darling", said Early Bird.

THE CLUB MICKY was a miniature concentration camp on the beach. Inside the wire fence were swings and rings and a trampoline and a hut. It cost rather more than twice what I had thought possible, and it looked exactly the sort of place where French kids could gang up on English kids and make them desperate and miserable, while the swarthy French louts who supervised would lurk in their cool dank hut exploring each other's hang-ups, or even bodies. I felt the accusation in Tom and Lisa's eyes but I avoided looking at them.

On the way back Early Bird stuck only one of her feet out of the window. "This is really awfully nice of you", she said.

"My pleasure", I said, which is what I always say, because it takes too long to explain, and people don't want to know about the exact proportions of pleasure, irritation, resentment, amusement, anger, guilt and despair I experience in doing things for them. You don't, do you? ("Thanks for writing me this story." "My pleasure. Thanks for reading it.")

"That's frightfully suave of you", she said, which indicated that perhaps she did understand, and then, alarmingly, "You're a very appealing sort of chap, aren't you?"

I concentrated on driving between the pot-holes, keenly aware that the leg that was not out of the window was resting against mine.

"Never mind", she said. "Its a shitty old world, isn't it?" She made that seem a bit of a game too.

"Look", she said, as we turned into English Alley. "D'you mind awfully if I sort of come and dump on you and your wife for a little while? I don't really want to go back to the tent, and I can't get off the camp because he won't give me the keys."

"Feel free", I said, which is another thing I say. "We're not doing anything special."

So for an hour or two we sat on our dusty patio while Early Bird told us all about herself and Smiley Face: how she had married him straight from school and what a desperate mistake it had been. She hadn't known anything then except that she liked chaps to be handsome and brown and sexy, all of which Smiley Face had been when she first met him, and full of brooding intensity, which had seemed to be absolutely the thing except that what he was brooding intensely about, even then, was probably how to avoid spending money on anyone else while contriving to have a bloody good time himself. This Brittany holiday was a particular case in point because somehow Early Bird had forgotten to bring her own francs with her, and Smiley Face was punishing her by refusing to eat out in restaurants, and insisting on two hot meals a day, three courses each, cooked by Early Bird on a rickety Calor Gas burner. It was a miserable story, but she made it entertaining, even exhilarating.

"He's the most terrible man in the world", she said proudly. "An absolute . . . bounder." Her eyes sparkled. "Look at him!" We looked down English Alley. There he sat, alone at his table, well down his second bottle of red wine. Early Bird waved. Smiley Face glowered. "Absolute bounder."

Then my wife and I went to fetch the kids back from Club Micky. When we got to the beach it looked like a deserted battlefield: broken toys, torn comics. Ruth and Lisa were sitting by the fence, their faces streaked with tears. James sat on the sand a little further off, pretending to read a tattered French comic. We asked them where Tom and Chloe had gone.

"Escaped", said Lisa. "They're down by the sea."

"Why didn't you escape?"

"We were too small and James is too wet."

"What was the trouble?"

"French kids ganged up on us."

"What were the . . . supervisors doing?"

"Dunno. They stayed in the hut."

"It's all right", said my wife. "You don't have to go any more."

"We'll have to", said James. "Because Daddy paid for the week."

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The sullen louts in the hut took our strictures philosophically but refused to tip up any refunds. I admired the style of the girl, who communicated a powerful contempt and apathy with the minimum of shrug and monosyllable. At one point she sighed and raised her arms slowly to put her hands behind her head. The hair in her armpits was long, tangled and sweaty. There was a smell in the hut: cool, seaweedy. Snatched, gritty, late-adolescent sex. Nobody put their feet out of the window on the way back to English Alley.

Holidays with us often begin as a series of baffling false starts. But we are good at being a family: we ride the false starts and wait for the pattern. The pattern was long days on the Côte Sauvage beaches, later and later meals, more and more Gros Plant, less and less thought. By the end of the first week I had stopped reading *Vanity Fair* and felt better for it. Often we took Early Bird's children with us, sometimes Early Bird herself. Her children found our absent-minded tolerance comforting. We found her dramas stimulating. She told us more about herself and Smiley Face, often featuring her own contributions to "our little disaster on wheels": extravagance, domestic incompetence, her "flings" and her "breakouts".

"He can't control me, you see", she would say, shaking the water out of her curly hair so that it ran down the Speedo one-piece she looked fourteen in. "He'd love to control me, but he can't. Hopeless! Disaster! What's next? Frisbee?"

Often Chloe, who had fallen in love with us, would come and sleep in our tent. She had to sleep with a night-light, she wet the bed, and she had nightmares. None of us seemed to mind this too much.

And English Alley continued to be English Alley, its residents continuing to perform pleasingly in the characters we had written for them. Nadine In the Trade said the camp swimming-pool was rubbish, and then fell in it. In the Trade, who shared her opinion, smacked her legs for it just the same. The Prat chortled up and down; we longed for his children to up-end him, but they never did. One evening Topless came home red-faced and aggrieved; he had been arrested and questioned for being bottomless on the topless beach. I thought I detected a shy *Schadenfreude* on his wife's pretty face, but I couldn't be sure.

THE DAY AFTER that I was lying in the tent after lunch. My wife had taken the children for the obligatory visit to the menhirs, a mile or so away. I wanted to be the only man who had been to Carnac and never seen a menhir. I had reached that pleasant state where I no longer needed to read, think, talk, smoke or drink. I was lying on the air-bed naked, and if I was thinking about anything, it was that my legs were satisfactorily brown right up to the crutch, browner even than my naturally swarthy cock, which was at the time flopped indolently across the narrow strip of white belly my bathers covered on the beach. The tent flap opened and Early Bird came in, blinking from the sunshine.

"Hello", she said, and then, "Oh. Sorry. Are you busy?"

"Not at all", I said. "Feel free." It's useful, isn't it, to have things that you always say.

She squatted on her heels beside me and took my cock in her hand.

"That's a nice one", she said.

We watched it grow in her hand for a little while, like a couple of patient gardeners. Then she let it go and smiled at me as if this too was all a bit of a game.

"Some people say that's absolutely the solution", she said. "But I think it's probably just part of the problem. Actually, what I came to say was, Richard wondered if you'd like to come over for a drink with him."

For a moment I wondered who Richard was, and then I remembered that Richard was Smiley Face's name.

"My pleasure", I said.

"I'm sorry, Joe", she said. "I mean if we were in Wolverhampton or something . . . shitty world. Never mind." She leant over and kissed me on the nose. The touch of her lips was dry and feathery.

SMILEY FACE was sitting in his usual place at the table, wearing his usual blue shorts. He was very brown and, close to, his body looked even more solid. Thick and smooth without being fat. Like a shark's body. He nodded to me and I sat on the stool opposite him. There was an open bottle of red wine on the table and four more in the shade underneath.

"Don't worry", said Smiley Face. "There's plenty more in the tent." And we began to drink.

"This is a damned unsatisfactory holiday", said Smiley Face half-way down the first bottle. I said that I was sorry to hear this, and he went on to explain that the camp was not satisfactory from the woman's point of view, that the cooking facilities were totally inadequate. No wonder the women were miserable and bolshy.

"Is your wife miserable and bolshy?" he asked.

"Not really", I said, and then to excuse myself, "We haven't been doing much cooking, and what we do we tend to share."

"You don't believe in the division of labour?"

"Not really, no", I said, wishing I could sound a bit less apologetic about it.

"Well, I'm sure you won't mind my telling you you're making a bloody big mistake", said Smiley Face. He was speaking in a quiet conversational tone but his eyes were glaring into mine with uncomfortable intimacy. He filled my glass.

"Of course, Marianne's unstable", he said. Again for a moment I wondered who he was talking about.

"She's . . . volatile", I offered carefully.

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"She's unbalanced. Look at the bloody children. They're all unbalanced."

"We like them", I said. I was going to say more, but he stared at me with what looked like such hatred that I stopped. I was beginning to realise how hot the sun was in that little square of garden, bouncing back almost tangibly off the metal table-top. I drank some more wine and Smiley Face filled my glass immediately.

"What d'you think of this stuff?" he said.

"Fine."

"But will it travel? That's what I'm trying to find out. But how the hell can you tell?" There was something splendid about Smiley Face's anger. It embraced the whole material world.

We drank some more wine, and the heat of the sun became easier to deal with. After the second bottle, Smiley Face's anger seemed to ease off, and he started to tell me a long rambling story about a holiday he had enjoyed, perhaps the only holiday he had enjoyed, before his marriage. He had been here in Brittany, camping with a group of friends, all male. Swimming, he said, fishing, water-skiing, diving off rocks. Primitive camping in two-man tents. I imagined them together with their hard, round bodies, seven or eight of them on a rock with water dripping off their dark moustaches, flopping lazily one by one into the blue water, swimming slowly in a long line towards the misty horizon; the reluctance with which they would turn, snorting like walruses, and swim slowly back to the clutter and complication of the shore.

When I started to pay attention again he was talking about Cyprus. I misunderstood him, thought he was still talking about holidays, and he stood up angrily and stumped off to his tent. When he came back he was carrying two more bottles of red wine, which he placed carefully under the table, and something wrapped in cloth that he put on top of the table between us. He unwrapped the cloth. It was a revolver.

"Go ahead", he said. "Pick it up."

I picked it up. I know nothing about guns at all. This one looked big and clumsy and felt extraordinarily heavy in my hand. It hurt my wrist to hold it. It frightened me.

"Chap I knew in Cyprus", said Smiley Face. "Actually he was a good friend of mine, shot himself with one of these. Made a dog's breakfast of it. Blew the side of his face off. He couldn't even get that right. You know, I couldn't forgive him for that."

The gun lay on the table between us. The sun bounced off it. It glittered and blurred. I began to feel dizzy.

In the sort of fiction I usually write, the kind I make such a good living at, you don't bring a gun into a story without eventually firing it. People feel cheated, don't they? So, possibilities: Smiley Face shoots himself. Smiley Face shoots Early Bird. And/or his children. Early Bird shoots Smiley Face. And so on. Or something ironic and oblique; we could foreground Fatty Peugeot and give him a flesh wound. *We* won't get shot. We have to be there for the end of the story. But there's the gun on the table. We've put it there now. You could say the same about a cock, of course. Or a pen. Or Fatty Peugeot. Nothing is for nothing. But we're trying to do something different in this story, aren't we? We're trying to say what it's really like. Do you mind me talking to you like this?

"The thing about Marianne", said Smiley Face after a bit. "I can't bear her, and I can't let her go. That's the thing. And I'll tell you something else. I've felt like that about everything I've cared for."

The sun seemed to have got hotter again. I wanted to speak to Smiley Face but my tongue felt huge, dry and swollen. I tried to focus on his face. Sweat was running in streams down his hard brown forehead, glistening in his eyebrows. One of his eyes looked much smaller than the other one. I realised that I was very drunk indeed and in need of some kind of help. I managed to say something about this.

"Sun on your head", said Smiley Face. "Bad for you. Get under the table. Cooler there."

I recognised that there was something bizarre about this suggestion and tried to say something about getting back to the tent.

"No", said Smiley Face. "Get under the fucking table. It's all you're fucking good for."

I realised that it was very important indeed to get up and walk back to our tent and lie down. I put my hands on the table and pushed myself up. The stool fell over but I was on my feet. I turned and walked back towards the tent. I heard a small metallic sound behind me but I didn't turn round. I had some confused notion about officers and gentlemen not shooting people in the back.

I fell on the bed and dreamed about Smiley Face, half his head gone, pursuing me through a restaurant which was also a cliffside. Somewhere in the dream I was Smiley Face as well, and I woke to a moment of authentic terror, having no idea not only where I was but who I was. Chloe and Lisa were looking at me with great interest.

"You were shouting really loud", said Lisa. "Everyone was coming to listen."

I tried to explain to my wife about Smiley Face, but I was still incoherent and she was not sympathetic. She told the girls to take me for a walk to get rid of me and sober me up.

"Where shall we take him?" said Chloe.

"I don't care. Take him to the menhirs."

This seemed a terrible idea to me, but I was too weak to resist. The two little girls took me, one to each arm, and dragged me jabbering and stumbling along the path the camp ponies used. I was aware of people staring,

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standing back, pressing themselves against the fence. Then I noticed that there were no more people and we had reached the menhirs.

The sun was going down. We were almost the only people there. Us and the menhirs. The girls led me down the whole length of the site. I had had no idea there were so many of them: blank, smooth, people-sized lumps of flat stone, standing in little groups, like silent families. So many of them, and no reason for them, blank, silent, grey, pointless. Who had decided when to stop? Who had decided that it was finished, that there were enough families?

By the time we got back to the other camp, our camp, I was making more sense and walking unsupported. I went and had a shower, and not much later gave a tolerable imitation of a family man eating *côte d'agneau grillé au feu de bois* in one of the many places where this was all too easy to do. Though my wife insisted on driving both ways. When we got back to English Alley it was quite dark, and I was gradually being forgiven. The afternoon was being gradually processed into anecdote, like the Topless Bottomless story. "He was groaning really loud all the way there, and he walked right through a great pile of horseshit!" "Dad, did Smiley Face really try to make you get under the table?" We were good at being a family. We knew how to handle these things.

Before I went to bed I went out and stood in the dark on our little dust patio. It was quiet in English Valley. The zips were closed. Only Topless's tent showed a flickering light behind the canvas, Topless presumably scanning his detailed maps for that elusive and ultimately topless beach. In the Trade's vast estate-car sat quietly in the moonlight like a patient hearse. Then, without meaning to, I glanced over to Smiley Face's garden. He was still there. He was still sitting at the table, alone in the dark. I felt frightened, knowing that something dreadful and final was going to happen, knowing too that I was part of it, and that I should go over and try to avert it, or take my part in it. But I didn't. I went back in our tent, where it was safe.

I had a different dream that night. I dreamt that the sea had come up and engulfed the camp: bits of tent, jumbled clothes, cardboard boxes leaking food were eddying about in the filthy water, full of drowned families. I was looking for my family but I couldn't find them, because all the cars were the same, and when I peered inside them the families had no faces, no distinguishing characteristics. They were all blank and smooth and flat, four or five to a car, grey and rounded and blank, like the menhirs.

I woke late, my head throbbing, and remembered. After a little while I was able to go out and look down the alley towards Smiley Face and Early Bird's tent. It was empty, and a couple of jolly young reps in red T-shirts were spring-cleaning it, shaking out the air-beds and putting empty bottles in sacks. Early Bird and Smiley Face had gone.

I AM WRITING this at night, on the verandah of our villa in Corfu. We have more money now, but we are not so good at being a family. Below me the sea beats regularly, and there are more stars in the sky than I can be doing with. Inside the villa my wife is in bed in one room. Lisa and her friend are in bed in the other room. Tom won't come away with us any more. It is very late, but I don't want to go in. I want to sit out here on my own and think about Early Bird and Smiley Face. I can't bear all this, but I can't let it go. My pen lies on the table.

## A Gift

With a new patch over his face
He bounces to the open door
Towards his feeding place
So I can see him claw

Into the house with one
Of Beaky's young, dead feet
New branching whiskers, gun-
Dog style. "I too find meat,

Kind friend", he says. "Perhaps
For you if you approve
Of baby blackbird." Slaps
I never give—all love

And nonsense, natural cat.
Thinking of songs he kills
I chase him gently out.
Before he eats he growls.

*Alan Dixon*

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*Amos Perlmutter*

# The Crisis of the PLO

## *Dilemmas of an Absolutist Movement*

*Amman, Jordan*

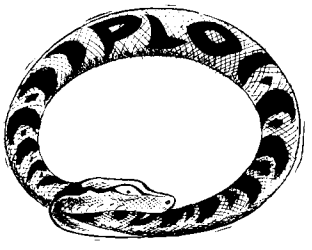
**"Among the surprises at the first major Arab summit [November 1987] in five years was the revival of Arab unity. . . . Libya was dismissed as an insignificant presence and Syria never had a chance to dissent. . . .**

**After four days of summitry the emergency meeting of heads of state approved a resolution that broke so many conventions that analysts and foreign diplomats were rattled by its force and puzzled by its meaning. The Arab world placed Iran ahead of Israel as a threat to Arab order, stability and territorial integrity. It flung the door wide open to any Arab country that wanted to resume diplomatic ties to Egypt, notwithstanding its 1979 peace agreement with Israel. And to the evident distress of Yasir Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the Arab leaders for the first time in 40 years dropped the Palestine issue to second-class status. . . .**

**By any measure it was a sea change in Arab politics. . . .**

**When three reporters presented themselves at the heavily guarded Plaza Hotel in response to one of Mr Arafat's numerous invitations for press interviews, the tough, impeccably well-dressed Jordanian Bedouin officer in charge of security greeted them with a smirk on his face. "You mean the Leader of the Palestinian armies, or is it the Leader of the Revolution? Sorry, he's gone out." The reporters persisted; asking whether he meant that Mr Arafat had left the hotel or left the country. "Does it really matter?" the officer responded, breaking into a big smile.**

YOUSSEF M. IBRAHIM, *The New York Times*




THE HISTORY of Palestinian nationalism in this century is a record of overweening ambition, combining a stubborn unwillingness to confront reality with a zealous spirit of rejectionism. The result has been an increasingly obvious political disaster. What we have seen over recent years is an ever-growing frustration and a festering hopelessness which have ignited frequent cycles of violence and terrorism.

This has been a movement led and dominated, to its detriment, by its most fanatic elements—revolutionaries whose orientations, tending always towards maximalist and unattainable utopian goals, enveloped the movement in a suffocating ideological strait-jacket. In a larger sense it has been linked to the Arab world and to the cause of Arab nationalism; through the years it has become the child (often the stepchild) of the Arab world at large—a flag to rally round, a banner for Pan-Arabism in the Arab and Islamic world.

It has tried to portray itself, especially in the form of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, as a brave, unregenerate, and unbowed guerrilla spearhead for "the destruction of the Zionist entity", indeed, as the only active Arab combatant force left in the field against Israel.

Linked as it has been to this cause, the movement has managed to portray itself in terms of martyrdom. It was the aggrieved party, victimised by Imperialist and Zionist interests, held back by "Western" (mainly American and Israeli) machinations. In this public-relations endeavour, it has been somewhat successful. It found sympathetic ears in Europe, where media and intellectual leaders sometimes have trouble separating the cause from its violent activists. In the 1970s, while appealing to progressive and liberal goodwill in Europe and in America, it created a wide and effective network of propaganda and terror, operating from the two sides of the Jordan River. At the same time it became the most affluent, technologically advanced, and generally feared terrorist organisation in the world.

Since the mid-1960s, the PLO, serving as the vanguard and symbol of Palestinian nationalist aspirations, has been the financial provider and protector for a host of terrorist organisations from all parts of the globe (including Ireland, Germany, Japan, Italy, Basque Spain, Lebanon, and Iran). It has

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become the model terrorist structure, along whose lines other terrorist organisations have fashioned themselves. According to an estimate in the *The Economist*, its treasury stands at a figure of nearly six billion US dollars (this equals one-third of Egypt's Gross National Product, and one-fourth of Israel's). It receives political and financial support from 22 Arab states, as well as from numerous Muslim states throughout the Third World, friendly and "progressive" parties in the West, and sympathetic circles in certain parts of the United Nations.

In spite of all its considerable political, military, and financial resources, in spite of the goodwill and sympathy its cause has generated, today the movement is farther from achieving its goals than ever before in its history—farther than in its infancy in the 1920s, farther surely than in the 1970s, when it achieved a high-water mark in terms of international respectability, even gaining the support of President Carter, who espoused the cause of the eventual creation of "an independent Palestinian state".

That dream of an Arab Palestine has been the avowed aim of every Palestinian, and seemed to many a reasonable goal. If all the Middle Eastern national movements had achieved independence, why shouldn't the Palestinians too have a state of their own—if Jordan, if Israel, why not Palestine? Why shouldn't the miserable plight of the Palestinian refugees be resolved? Why not end the Palestinian diaspora? Why shouldn't the Palestinians claim their "place in the sun", and make their bid for nation-state sovereignty?

THE ANSWERS are not a simple matter of defining the rightness or general justice of a cause, but involve following its course throughout this century. An historian would be led to the conclusion, based on over 50 years of Palestinian nationalist, guerrilla, and terror action, with little or no sign of compromise in negotiations or diplomacy, that since the 1920s there had been no effort on the part of Pan-Arabism or Palestinian nationalism to accept anything less than the complete fulfilment of an unwavering set of non-negotiable demands.

(*1*) The destruction, if not the total annihilation of "the Zionist Entity", either politically or militarily, whether it be the *Yishuv* (the Jewish immigrants to Palestine during the British Mandate) of the 1930s and 1940s, or the state of Israel since 1948.

(*2*) The establishment of an independent Palestinian state, over the whole of mandatory Palestine, which would include "Transjordan", or the present-day state of Jordan.

(*3*) The total denial of Jewish nationhood and statehood, to delegitimise Zionist Israel's reason for existence.

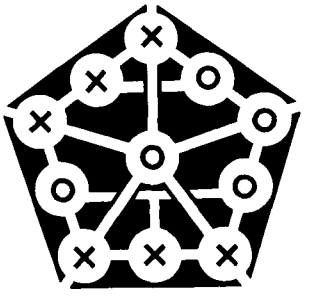
The explanation for the Palestinian nationalist movement's being as far from its goals as ever—especially when contrasted with the success of the *Yishuv*, which became the state of Israel and firmly entrenched itself as "a nation among nations"—can be surmised from reading the PLO charter, which was written in 1964 and has not veered one centimetre from its original utopian and militant aspirations.

To take a brief look at the history of Palestinian nationalism, and at that of the PLO, which became its sole political, military and ideological force, is to see a movement trying to achieve its goals solely through the use of force and terrorism. The PLO used terror in the West Bank in 1968, in 1970 in Jordan, in 1982 in Lebanon, and today still espouses the strategy and tactics of terror. Yet all its military and terroristic efforts have come to naught. It was ousted from the West Bank and Gaza by Israel in 1968; from Jordan, in 1970, by King Hussein; and from Lebanon by the Israelis in 1982. Indiscriminate and escalating international terror cost the PLO dearly in terms of valuable Western support and public opinion (especially in the USA where, after the sympathetic ear of President Carter, it faced the openly hostile attitude of the Reagan Administration).

Have Palestinian nationalists and the PLO leaders in particular learned anything from frustrations and disaster? They never once ventured down the avenue of negotiation, diplomacy, or "compromise" in the wake of the failure of force and arms. After the 1967 War left Israel in control of the West Bank and Gaza, the PLO made considerable gains in terms of prestige and propaganda; yet it was never able to turn those advantages into solid political achievement. After 1967, it enjoyed support throughout the Arab world, as well as in considerable segments of the international community. It established a network of legitimate embassies (more in number than those established by Israel) and gained what amounted to sovereign status in the international world, much like a functioning state. Furthermore, the Palestinian cause (and the PLO as its "sole representative") acquired almost autonomous status in the Arab world when, in Rabat in 1974, at a meeting of Arab states, it was decided that the PLO alone could negotiate the fate of Palestine and Palestinian nationhood. In one fell swoop, the notion that peace in the Middle East could be achieved only between Arab states and Israel was suddenly linked to the future of "the Palestinian entity" as a solution to the Palestinian issue.

Today the PLO, considerably weakened both militarily and politically, remains wedded firmly to its radical elements, its goals as chimerical as ever. The clues to its "rise and decline" can be found in the roots and growth of Palestinian nationalism.

## *1. The Militant Pattern*



FROM ITS INCEPTION, circumstances in Mandatory Palestine were clearly different from other British responsibilities in the Middle East. All were Muslim states: in the Arab Gulf, Britain ruled Iraq by an Anglo-Iraqi treaty; Egypt by treaty; and a truncated Transjordan under mandate from the League of Nations. There, Arab nationalists claimed and eventually received independence, but Palestine remained a special legal case in which the Mandatory was responsible to the Zionist movement and the Jewish community in Palestine, as well as to the Muslim and Arab community.

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It was a troublesome responsibility. The Mandatory had to deal with the growing and emerging nationalist spirit in both communities. As the Zionist movement emerged in the 1890s, and grew with the establishment of the first Jewish-Zionist settlements at the turn of the century, so the emerging Palestinian nationalist movement called for the rejection of Zionist settlements and immigration.

In the 1920s, and especially the 1930s—the period referred to by the nationalists as "the Arab Revolt" and by the Zionists as "the Riots"—the aim of the Palestinian nationalists was to oust the British and to terrorise the Jewish community, which they saw as an ally of the colonial power. The crystallisation of the Palestinian-Arab ideology was set against the Zionist movement. Its essential thrust, with general Arab support, was to fight the Balfour Declaration, the instrument of "the Jewish national home"; to have the Mandatory abandon the Declaration; and to restrict Jewish immigration and land-purchase. Eventually, the British came to support this position with the policy laid down in its White Paper of May 1939. Yet a policy of anti-Zionism was not necessarily a positive policy of forming a Palestinian state, but rather of preventing by force the realisation of "Zionism" in Palestine.

The first important figure in the rise of Palestinian nationalism as an effective movement was al-Hadj Amin al-Husayni, who at the tender age of 22 was appointed Grand Mufti of Jerusalem by the pro-Zionist High Commissioner of Palestine, Lord (Herbert) Samuel. Husayni emerged as a major political-religious figure, occupying as he did a position where politics and religion converged—the most crucial post in the Palestinian pantheon of leaders: he was the scion of a prominent Jerusalem Arab family which had held the position of Grand Mufti since Ottoman days.

THE YOUNG Husayni, educated at al-Azhar University in Cairo, was trained by the fundamentalist and fanatical Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and he learned his lessons well. Charismatic and aggressive, he used his position as head of the Supreme Muslim Council effectively, gathering together and organising discontented rural and urban Palestinians under his banner. He exploited his high office to lead the first open riots against the Jews in Jerusalem in 1929, creating in the process an effective Palestinian nationalist party. He exercised single-minded authority, and was not afraid to move against fellow-Palestinians or opponents from within, infiltrating and subverting other Palestinian parties at will, especially parties of a more moderate viewpoint than his own in relation to the Zionists and the British.[1]

Using the huge financial resources of the religious institution AWQAF, upon which all Palestinian groups depended but which he controlled, Husayni quashed the opposition groups, and under the banner of anti-British imperialism and anti-Zionism became the most important (and the most autocratic) Palestinian leader. Under his guidance, the Palestinian nationalist movement became a political and military guerrilla organisation, successfully mobilising both urban Palestinian youths and rural Muslim fundamentalists.

Husayni's programme was threefold. He called for (*1*) the ousting of Zionist settlements from Palestine by force; (*2*) rejection of British and Arab intermediary efforts to bring about a political compromise with the Zionists; and (*3*) rejection of any negotiations. Husayni was adamant on this last point, for to negotiate was to recognise Zionist legitimacy; and this he would not allow. Negotiation and possible compromise meant recognition of at least some Zionist claims.

The process of radicalising Arab and Islamic youth, mobilising a "terror machine", and solidifying the movement's "rejectionist stance" governed Husayni's efforts and strategy.

THE ARAB REVOLT of 1936-1939, led by Husayni, was two-pronged. It would be a fight against the Mandatory, and "a war against Zionism", i.e. against the Jewish community in Palestine. Husayni began by persuading the Arab business community and the urban middle class to stage a general strike. In the process, he received financial help from Arab nations outside Palestine (notably Syria and Iraq). The strike failed, not because of the rather tentative British reaction, but because promised financial support from Arab sources never materialised. But it did have its achievements, the most notable of which was that for the first time Arab countries and régimes involved themselves in the Palestinian cause, however ineffectually, and sent volunteers, mostly guerrillas and irregulars, to join in the struggle. The process of the Arabisation of the Palestinian conflict had begun.

The Revolt got under way in earnest with the assassination of the British District Commissioner of Galilee, followed by sporadic outbursts of violence in the villages as youths rioted, urged on by the Imams and the Qadis. Next, the terror moved against the Jewish community proper, with riots in Jewish settlements and Jewish quarters as bands of trained guerrilla fundamentalists joined with Arab volunteers to attack Jewish settlements in the Valley of Jezrael.

The violence triggered reprisals led by a newly-formed "Jewish resistance" in Palestine—a resistance that would eventually be organised into a standing paramilitary group called the *Haganah*, which in turn would later become Israel's Defence Force, the IDF.

The British, alarmed, moved to quell the Revolt, and they did so in resolute fashion. Fearing that they were losing control of the situation, the British District Commissioners inflicted severe punitive measures upon the Arab community; and with the help of military reinforcements finally crushed the rebels.

With the end of the Revolt, the Grand Mufti and the leaders of the Palestinian nationalist movement could look at the result. There were some obvious lessons to be learned. First, the Revolt demonstrated the weakness of the Palestinian political community, which had fallen apart as soon as the British challenged the rioters. Second, Husayni's suppression of his own opposition had weakened his cause: the strike had re-

[1] On al-Hadj Amin al-Husayni, see Yehoshua Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestine-Arab National Movement 1918-1929* (1974), ch. 4, pp. 184-207, and Elie Kedourie, *The Chatham House Version* (1970), ch. 3, pp. 52-81.

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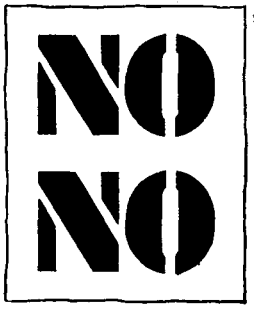
vealed the defects of his movement and its lack of middle-class support. Third, the Revolt showed a glaring lack of political and military effectiveness—not for the last time. With their lack of organisation and inability to select strategic goals, the nationalists had failed to inflict serious damage on the *Yishuv* or the Jewish community, not to mention the British Mandatory. Promised Arab military and financial support had never materialised in any truly helpful way, while the Arab volunteers had managed only to harass Palestinian villagers, thus negating any support Husayni might have gained at the local level.

The pattern of failure of Palestinian military action and its Arab support was established then and there; and it would repeat itself through the next five decades.

## 2. *Dead & Deadly Ends*




The British, by the adoption of the White Paper policy in 1939, signalled to moderate Palestinians and Arabs that there was another way, that a willingness to engage in diplomacy could be rewarding. In this case, the reward was an end to Jewish immigration and to Jewish purchase of land from the Palestinians. Apparently chastened to some degree by the Revolt, the British had clearly abandoned the Balfour Declaration, and the new policy took a definite tilt toward the Arab position.

Unfortunately for the Palestinian nationalist movement, its leadership (as personified by Husayni and his sycophants) remained adamantly "rejectionist" and refused to accept any British offer of reconciliation and accommodation. With his movement in disarray in the wake of the Revolt fiasco, Husayni embarked on a strenuous, bizarre, and, in terms of his movement, totally unproductive courtship of Nazi Germany. Just as Yasir Arafat would turn toward the Soviet Union for help, so Husayni turned toward the Nazi and Italian Fascist dictators. It was not immediately forthcoming.

His initial overtures were at first rebuffed by the Nazi diplomats, who were not yet ready to "upset the British". Although Hitler was aware that the Zionists sought not only to create a refuge for Jews, but to establish an independent state, he at first showed a "willingness to use Zionism to reverse the assimilationist tendencies of the German Jewish community and to promote rapid emigration of Jews from Germany. . . ." But he refused at that time to support Husayni and his movement. Hoping that British "imperialist instincts" would help make an Anglo-German understanding a reality, Hitler instead supported British rule over what he called the "inferior" races—while Germany established a European hegemony. His attitude toward Arab nationalism was conditioned by his *Englandpolitik*. Thus, "repeated Arab attempts throughout the 1930s to secure German diplomatic, financial and material assistance against the Zionists and the British in Palestine were rejected. . . ."[2]

World War II was to change all that. In 1941, the Mufti was busy organising Muslims in Bosnia to serve under the *SS*, hoping to link up with the Nazis so that when General Rommel conquered Palestine, the Zionists would be annihilated.

Accordingly, the *entente cordiale* between Hitler and the Arab nationalists began in earnest in the summer of 1941 with a Nazi declaration recognising their demands. This moved Husayni into a more conspicuous relationship with Hitler. Mussolini followed suit by recognising Palestinian rights to nationhood as Husayni travelled from Rome to Berlin. On 28 November 1941, Hitler met Husayni for an hour-and-a-half, and reiterated that after the War, when the Jews had been eliminated, the Arab "Hour of Liberation" would come, as well as its "fulfilment". He assured the Mufti of Nazi Germany's uncompromising war against the Jews, and his opposition to a Jewish homeland in Palestine.[3] Husayni became the leading Arab representative in the Nazi court, so much so that he was assigned a role in the *SS* administration of Yugoslavia.

The resort to violence had not died with the crushing of the Arab Revolt by the British. The Mufti and his associates, in collaboration with radical nationalists in Iraq, Syria and Egypt, were rekindling the aspiration of achieving an independent Arab Palestinian state and the eventual ousting of the Zionists—if the Nazis were victorious. They were not, and the Mufti, charged with being a "war criminal", escaped to Egypt. The British, by now wary of angering the Arabs, would not extradite Husayni.

But what about the diplomatic route through negotiations? What hope was there, and how much had been attempted? Arab-Zionist diplomacy did indeed exist, but the end-result had usually been one of futility. Between 1913 and 1931, as one historian records, "each party had . . . a fairly rich experience of contact and negotiation with the other". It all came to nothing. The goal of Palestinian nationalism remained the same—the subversion of the Balfour Declaration, not compromise with the Zionists.

Still, in 1918, Chaim Weizmann, then President of the World Zionist Organisation, had met Emir Faisal, leader of the pro-British Hashemite Arabs. Other Zionist leaders and officials had met their counterparts in the Palestinian movement. But the negotiations were informal, and amounted merely to "contact" meetings, with no specific aims or agendas.

There were certainly Arab leaders who accepted what the Zionists appeared to offer—Jewish development and capital, technical assistance, and international political support in exchange for Arab recognition of "some form" of Jewish national existence in Palestine, including pressure on the Palestinian Arabs to moderate their hostility toward the Zionist programme. The moderate Arabs could not deliver, nor could the Zionists provide, "either weighty pro-Arab

[2] Francis R. Nicosia, *The Third Reich and the Palestine Question* (1985), pp. 193-201.
[3] Lukasz Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (1966), pp. 218-221.

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political lobbying or substantial economic assistance to the Arabs".[4]

The Arab Revolt and the 1937 Peel "partition plan" elevated the level of negotiations with Arab leaders. This time, David Ben Gurion (then Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the most powerful political and labour leader in Palestine) moved into the arena. Ben Gurion met Syrian, Iraqi, and Palestinian Arab leaders, and proposed that the Zionist entity become autonomous within the framework of an Arab Federation—or, alternatively, that Zionist leaders would look favourably on a Pan-Arab Federation next to a Jewish entity. Ben Gurion never spoke of "a state"—he sought a political *quid pro quo*: Arab recognition of the Zionist enterprise in exchange for Zionist recognition of the aspirations of Pan-Arabism. It marked a considerable concession. There were also proposals for a "legislative council", supported by Ben Gurion but rejected by Palestinian leaders.

It appears that, even in the midst of the Revolt, Zionist leaders sought to negotiate: during the rioting Ben Gurion had had a meeting with the prominent Palestinian intellectual George Antonius. But the only reason the Palestinians met Ben Gurion at all was to placate Mandatory officials who had urged them to seek "negotiations" as a form of "overture". The Arabs, like the Zionists, oriented their diplomacy toward the British, not toward each other.

In 1929 Ben Gurion had offered a plan for an Arab-Zionist Federation with separate but autonomous Jewish and Arab entities which would cooperate with the British Mandatory. These autonomous entities were to evolve into cantons, "with full self-rule" in national, cultural and religious affairs, governed by a cantonal Parliament, with security and foreign affairs in the hands of the High Commissioner.

Ben Gurion set aside the question of Jewish sovereignty, rejecting "bi-nationalism", Arab self-determination, or a joint Arab-Zionist Parliament. But he was ready to discuss these issues in negotiations, and he established a special Jewish Agency, a department for research and intelligence, to direct Arab affairs and encourage personal and agency dialogues and meetings with Palestinian and Arab leaders. As Musa al-Alami—a respected Palestinian moderate who had had several talks with Ben Gurion—admitted recently, the Mufti had derailed every effort made by Alami and the Zionists. Husayni remained adamant—no partition, no direct negotiations, the Revolt continues. . . .

The British finally retreated from partition and in February 1939 called for an Arab-Zionist conference in London. The Zionists agreed but the Arabs called for separate conferences (one British-Arab, the other British-Zionist), so as to avoid any appearance of Arab legitimation for Zionism. The Arab leaders responded more cautiously than their Palestinian counterparts. No actual Arab-Zionist negotiations took place in London, only repetition of well-established positions on the part of both delegations and movements. Thus the curtain fell on British and Zionist attempts to bring about reconciliation through diplomacy and negotiation.

[4] Neil Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy: Early Arab-Zionist Negotiation Attempts 1913-1931* (1966), vol. I, pp. 109-127, 120.

[5] Neil Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy* . . ., p. 177.

Why did diplomacy and negotiation fail? A number of explanations have been offered, but they do not stand the test of historical analysis.

First, there is the argument that the conflict persists because of "an absence of communication". This is simply not true. Obviously, both sides attempted to communicate—as evidenced by the many meetings between Zionist and Arab leaders.

Then there is the argument that the leaders of both sides did not try hard enough to reach an agreement. They did try, and often; but Arab moderates were consistently undermined and defeated by Palestinian extremists.

Again, there is the argument that Zionist leaders "ignored" the existence of the rights of Palestinian Arabs. But Ben Gurion's peace plan, and his willingness to explore and learn about Arab conditions, repeatedly demonstrated a forthcoming and compromising attitude on the part of the Zionists.

Lastly, there is the argument that "no Arab moderates existed". Indeed they did, and many of them were able and prominent Arab and Palestinian leaders, intellectuals, and community officials. But from the start the Palestinian nationalist movement had been dominated by radicals and even fanatics, who gave the movement its extremist tone and direction—a situation that continues to this day.

The assassin's bullet marks the end of Arab moderation. King Abdullah of Jordan was murdered by a Palestinian extremist in 1951 as he approached the Holy Mosque in Jerusalem. President Anwar Sadat was killed by a Moslem fundamentalist extremist in 1982. The PLO moderate Said Hamami was shot in London in 1983; so was his colleague, Isam Sartawi (the PLO Head of Office in London in 1984), as he negotiated with Israeli moderates. PLO extremism's main target is, of course, King Hussein of Jordan.

## 3. *Post-War Policies*

In the aftermath of World War II, there were basically four options for a Palestinian solution:[5]

(*1*) An independent Arab state in an undivided Palestine with minority guarantees to the Zionists.

(*2*) A Jewish Commonwealth in all of Palestine, with constitutional guarantees for the Arab minority.

(*3*) A federal Palestine with Arab and Jewish cantons.

(*4*) The partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states.

At the end of the War, the existing Arab states stood in a seemingly strong position. The War had given them independence, command over vast oil-fields, and a genuine opportunity to become united. Although many Arab potentates and Palestinian rulers had openly supported the Nazis during World War II, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia

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and the Lebanon were among the founding members of the newly-formed United Nations. The Palestinian leadership of Amin al-Husayni and his immediate family and agents appeared discredited, and the Arab League appointed the moderate Musa al-Alami as its Palestinian representative.

Flushed with apparent success, the Arabs (with the help of the British) set about constructing the means of their eventual failure. The British allowed the Mufti to return to politics, which meant the removal of Musa al-Alami and ensured that the Palestinian nationalist movement would once again be in the hands of its most extreme members.

From 1945 to 1947, Palestine was in a state of constant turmoil. The trio of Jewish underground organisations—the *Haganah*, *Etzel* and *Lehi*—declared direct or indirect war on "British colonialism in Palestine". The mainstream elements of the *Yishuv* alternated between a policy of diplomacy and the use of force in dealing with the Mandatory. After 1945, Ben Gurion saw his goals as follows:

(*1*) The ingathering of the remnants of the Jews from Europe and stepped-up immigration of Jews to Palestine.

(*2*) The formation of a Jewish armed force ready to meet the expected Arab threat.

(*3*) The partition of Palestine.

Ben Gurion advocated a twofold policy of diplomacy and resistance. For Ben Gurion and the majority of the *Yishuv* Zionist leaders, "partition" meant the formation of a Jewish Commonwealth or state in a divided Palestine. As expected, the Arab League and the Palestinian nationalist movement, led by the Mufti, rejected partition, accommodation, diplomacy, or compromise.

The British refused to leave Palestine; they tried various stratagems to ensure that they remained. Still, they were hounded by the Jewish resistance, and consequently tried to throw the Palestinian question into the lap of the United Nations. It proved to be a tactical mistake of enormous proportions.

British foreign policy, in the hands of the Labour Foreign Minister, Ernest Bevin, failed to stem the tide of Jewish resistance, Arab intransigence, and US reluctance. The great-power rivalries that made themselves felt after the War, between the USA and the Soviet Union (and the USA and Britain), helped to create favourable conditions in the United Nations for the Zionist cause. Somehow, the British never quite managed to get the right mix in Palestine. The British wanted the US "in", and the US wanted the British "out".

What was clear was that Bevin, the Foreign Office, the British military, and the Colonial Office were now dedicated in their support of Pan-Arabism and Arab nationalists in Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq. They constantly reassured the Palestinian Arabs that there would be no partition, and no independent and sovereign Jewish state. The British doggedly clung to their White Paper policy, harassing the illegal Jewish immigration (Operation *Exodus* and the disgraceful scenes in the Hamburg harbour, etc.). But British support and goodwill, the White Paper policy, and its opposition to Jewish statehood were not enough for the Arab leadership. They never fully believed that the British would totally abandon the Balfour Declaration.

What the Arabs failed to realise (or to appreciate adequately) was the impact of Hitler's Holocaust on democratic public opinion throughout the world, or that the Zionists had successfully outmanoeuvred them in lobbying the Americans and the Russians, both of whom (in November 1947) voted in the United Nations for the partition of Palestine.

The Arabs had consistently overestimated British powers and intentions, especially over the formation of the Arab League. Great Britain did not create the Arab League, but had encouraged its formation, hoping, through the support of Pan-Arabism, to solve the Palestinian question in the broader framework of Arab unity.[6]

In the complex arena of Anglo-American and later Palestinian-American diplomacy, the Zionists were active and, in the end, successful. The Holocaust and the victory over Nazism had become effective Zionist weapons.

NOW THE OLD ARAB PANACEA—the formation of an Arab Federation, the "Fertile Crescent", Greater Syria, Egyptian Pan-Arabism, etc.—converged on and almost eradicated Palestinian nationalism. Radical Arab forces once again intervened, and took up the cause of Palestinian sovereignty . . . to the detriment of the cause.

The Palestinians wanted the support of Pan-Arabism, but without having to endure its suffocating embrace. Nevertheless, "the Palestinian question" was now firmly lodged as an instrument of Pan-Arabism, even though the Arab League was in no condition to offer any substantial military or diplomatic support. The Arab League, in fact, became an arena for the different claimants of Pan-Arabism—the Hashemite Pan-Arabism of Transjordan's Emir Abdullah, and the Pan-Arabism of Nuri as-Said of Iraq. Egypt, unwilling to become entangled in this imbroglio, tried to block the League. The Syrians rejected a Federation led by Abdullah, while Iraq claimed the seniority of the Hashemite Kingdoms.

Thus, the partition of Palestine took place at the feverish height of Pan-Arabist conflict; i.e., at the least favourable moment for Arab unity, when the cause of Palestinian nationalism was in effect being torn to shreds by the machinations of Transjordan, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt.

WITH THE COMING OF PARTITION, there were only two elements in the Middle East which recognised the limitations at hand—the Jewish Agency and Emir Abdullah. As for the rest—the Pan-Arabists, the Mufti, and the Palestinian nationalists—all were ready to take part in an all-out "war of annihilation" against the newly proclaimed state of Israel before it became firmly entrenched.

Between November 1947 and March 1948, while the British Mandatory forces were still in place, the Arabs initiated attacks on Jewish settlements. Arab rejection of partition was total. This was "a war against partition" and "a war against the Zionist entity", fully supported by the Pan-Arabist na-

[6] Yehoshua Porath, *In Search of Arab Unity 1930-1945* (1986), p. 312.

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tions and by the Palestinian nationalist forces. Not a single moderating Arab voice was heard. Rejection of the 1947 UN Resolution on Partition was as complete as it had been in 1937. Palestinian nationalist forces conducted a terrorist, guerrilla-style war, while the Arab armies of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Transjordan, and Iraq invaded, all in highly uncoordinated fashion. There was no combined Arab chief-of-staff, and no real Arab military strategy; there were only separate armies roaming at will around Palestine, most of them in woefully unprofessional fashion (with the exception of the British-trained and British-led Arab Legion).

While Arab volunteers and irregular Palestinian forces once again attacked Zionist villages, the Arab armies moved cautiously—the Arab Legion of Transjordan in East Jerusalem; the Egyptians in the Negev; and the Syrians and Iraqis in Galilee. The basic weakness of the Palestinian forces inflated the role of the Pan-Arab forces, each Arab régime claiming ascendancy in the name of Pan-Arabism.

The sole Arab ruler who appeared to understand the strength and staying-power of the Zionist forces was King Abdullah of Jordan. Though his Arab Legion held its own against the Israelis, he realised that victory was impossible and secretly negotiated with Ben Gurion. (After the war, he accepted a *modus vivendi* with Israel on the future of Jerusalem, which was then divided between Israel and Jordan.)

With the war tilting in Israel's favour, Count Folke Bernadotte, an ambitious UN mediator, called for a cease-fire. The Arab League failed to negotiate; the Israelis accepted. Ben Gurion nevertheless realised that Israel must free the Negev and Galilee; that Jewish legitimacy, within the United Nations context of partition, must be established by the war. With continued Arab defeats and Israeli victories, Bernadotte offered to negotiate on Jewish immigration and on the demilitarisation of Jerusalem and its internationalisation. Bernadotte's assassination by members of a *Lehi* terror squad ended that prospect.

Israel was winning a costly and fierce struggle against five invading Arab armies as well as the Palestinian nationalists. It cost her 10,000 casualties out of a population of some 600,000, but the Palestinian nationalists found themselves in total disarray. The result was the partition of Arab Palestine among Israel, Egypt in Gaza, Jordan on the West Bank, Syria in the Golan. The major part, as allocated by UN partition, went to the Zionists to form the new state of Israel.

The biggest losers were the Palestinians, some 550,000 of whom left Palestine to disperse in unfriendly Arab countries or to become refugees. The "war on partition" conducted by Pan-Arabists and the Palestinians had been lost, and with it perhaps the last real chance for the formation of a Palestinian state.

The Jewish Zionist state, which had come into being amidst a bitterly fought war, was legitimised by the United Nations and the world community. The political, diplomatic, and military victory of the Zionists left the Pan-Arabists frustrated and seething with a thirst for revenge, while the Palestinian nationalist movement submerged itself in an unfriendly Arab world.

The legacy of the war was devastating for the Palestinians. They had become stateless, displaced persons in the Arab world, their leadership bankrupt and their spirit broken. The initial wrath of the Palestinians was at first directed at their Arab allies, and then towards Israel and the Zionists. Only Jordan, which had incorporated the West Bank in 1950, made their Palestinian residents citizens. In the rest of the Pan-Arab world—Gaza, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria and Iraq—the Palestinians remained stateless foreigners.

Was this the point when the Palestinian nationalists learned an historic lesson? Dependence on the Pan-Arabists, on the Arab League, on Arab régimes, on Kings, Presidents, and sundry praetorians was detrimental to the Palestinian cause. A new generation of Palestinian leaders, now that the Mufti was finally discredited, learned to look at things differently. In the words of Fawaz Turki, a Palestinian Arab: "We became the disinherited." They were indeed discriminated against at every level of Arab society. Turki wrote, "I hated, first, the Arabs. . . ."[7] But did the rise of the Jewish state modify the aspirations or goals of the next generation of Palestinians?

THE STRUGGLE FOR PALESTINE continued. A new generation of Palestinians took up the battle, and again a familiar conflict between radicals and pragmatists evolved. The tension tilted once again towards the maximalists, still searching for their elusive utopian revolution.

In their exile, Palestinian leaders and extremists called for a Palestine whose boundaries were a mirror image of those called for by extreme Zionists. The Palestinians saw a land that extended from the Mediterranean to the Arabian desert, from the Litani to Eilath and Aqaba, a state through which the Jordan River would flow. This was the obverse of the Jabotinsky-Begin territorial claim of *Eretz Yisrael*.

## 4. *The PLO Covenant*

WHAT WAS the nature of these new groups of Palestinian nationalists? Who supported and shielded them, who inspired them? In spite of the lessons of the War, it was the spirit of Arab radicalism and Arab nationalism which re-sparked Palestinian nationalism. The fiery models were the Algerian war of liberation; the anti-colonial war in Indo-China; the Egyptian Revolution of Nasser; the rise of Syrian radical Ba'ath Renaissance parties, spreading from Beirut and Damascus to Jordan, Iraq, and Palestine.

[7] Shaul Mishal, *The Palestine Liberation Organization Under Arafat: Between the Gun and the Olive Branch* (Yale University Press, 1986), p. 3.

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The "disinherited" were coteries of students, literary men, teachers, intellectuals and journalists in Gaza, Egypt, and the Gulf, nurtured by Pan-Arab enthusiasm, this time in the Nasser and Ba'athist vein. They were guided by old doctrines, distilled and recoloured in a new political language. Some found their inspiration in the Soviet Union, others were enthused by the slogans of anti-colonialism, or of Third World "Revolutionism" and the burgeoning international subculture of guerrilla warfare and terrorism.

As the new Palestinian nationalists sought to wean themselves from the influence of traditional Pan-Arabism, the search began for a certain intellectual autonomy and independence: a new style of Palestinianism, speaking a Marxist-tinged vocabulary distinctly different from their Arabist mentors of the past.

Yet any examination of the post-War emergence of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, of Yasir Arafat, and of the PLO's charter indicates that, ideologically, the Palestinian nationalists were not altogether a new growth; they remained heirs of the Mufti, and were (until 1967) politically dependent on Nasser and financially dependent on oil revenues from the Gulf states.

The PLO Covenant, formulated in 1964, was the subject of considerable argument among the Palestinians; and is debated by friends and foes to this day, precisely because it has not changed one iota. At its heart the charter incorporates all the absolutist and "rejectionist" elements of the past, calling for an independent Palestinian state which is obviously intended to replace the present state of Israel. It calls for the delegitimisation of Zionists as a foreign occupier, and as a people who do not merit nationhood: the proposed Palestinian state, clearly, is to be formed on the physical and ideological ruins of Zionism and Israel.

Some sections of the charter, disinheriting the Israeli Jews of their rights to nationhood and to sovereignty, are reminiscent of certain 19th-century (and 20th-century) anti-Semitic tracts. It calls for the expulsion of Jews, especially those Zionists who arrived in Palestine after the Balfour Declaration of 1917: Jews are to be foreigners in the land, or usurpers who must be ejected.

The charter does not specify how this might be done, nor does it, in so many words, call for the physical annihilation of the Jews: it simply calls for an end to Israel. There is, however, no mention of the possibility of diplomacy or negotiation: there is to be a total struggle.

As for the new Palestinian entity, there is no mention of a specific political structure—although the Palestinian Left has stated that free Palestine would be a Marxist-Leninist state. The charter declined to specify the nature of the emergent régime; it merely proclaimed its boundaries.

In one important sense, the charter marks a departure from the past—and one which speaks volumes of disappointment. From then on, the charter makes clear, the destiny of the Palestinian people and the conduct of its political aims was to be sought independently of the Pan-Arab movements and the ruling Arab governments. The crucial aspect of the PLO, next to its unwavering commitment to the destruction of Zionism, is its claim to autonomy, evincing its desire to become master of its own fate.

Yet the PLO, in point of historical fact, was as much a creature of insurgent Egypt as a creation of its own. The PLO was born in the valley of Nasser's Nile. The main wing of the PLO, *Al-Fatah*—which reverses the Arabic initials of "Movement for the Liberation of Palestine" and refers to the famous Koran verse "Assistance from God and Imminent Conquest"—began as groups of *Fedayeen*, or Palestinian irregulars, organised by Nasser. They first appeared in the 1950s out of Gaza, raiding and penetrating Jewish *Kibbutzim* and settlements. This eventually led to the 1956 Sinai war—a military disaster for Egypt and Nasser, but not the end of the *Fedayeen*. Nasser saw them as the spearhead of a new kind of warfare with Israel, to be followed by a war of annihilation. Thus, before 1967 the *Fatah* and the PLO were still basically Egyptian instruments which would fan the sparks of conflict.

Not until 1967, when the combined armed forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria suffered a devastating defeat at the hands of Israel, did *Fatah* and the PLO emerge into its own almost by default, since it was the only military organisation left in the field to fight Israel in its own way. Thus the objectives of the *Fedayeen-Fatah* kind of war expanded: they aimed not merely at "the liberation of Palestine" but at the destruction of the existing usurpation in a general purging of the Middle East.

In 1968, *Fatah* and Arab leaders met in Cairo to confirm the PLO Covenant, which had remained unamended. The charter was now officially approved by all parties, and served as the basis of an organisational structure. At the Cairo meeting, a unified Palestinian military command was established to fulfil the aims of the charter and the aspirations of the Palestinians.

Historically, the Covenant preceded the establishment of the PLO. Its central tenet is "the repudiation of the existence of Israel". It calls for (*1*) the "whole of Palestine as an independent Palestinian Arab state" (denying Israeli as well as Jordanian sovereignty over historical Palestine. It states that (*2*) Palestinians "are an integral part of the Arab world"; and (*3*) calls for the redemption of Palestinian personality, for self-determination, and for Palestinian statehood, an end to alienation and isolation, and the regaining of dignity and freedom. Referring to Zionism, the Covenant "encompasses intrinsic moral, utilitarian, volitional, legal and historical arguments, which all converge into a total negation as a matter of principle of the existence of the state of Israel in any form or size. . . ."[8]

Article 6 of the Covenant lays down the fundamental atti-

[8] The best analysis and most reliable translation and interpretation of the PLO Covenant in English is that of the Israeli political theorist Yehoshafat Harkabi, *The Palestinian Covenant and its Meaning* (1979), p. 48; see also "International Documents on Palestine" (1968), Harkabi, p. 403. Harkabi's analysis of the Covenant *forced* the PLO in its 1969 Convention in Cairo to modify some parts of Article 6, revising the outlawing of Jews who came to Palestine after 1917. See the *Palestine Yearbook* (Beirut, 1968), p. 71.

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tude towards Zionism: "The Jews who had normally resided in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians." The meaning of this article was elaborated in the fourth Palestinian National Convention (1968).

> "The Assembly affirms, moreover, that the aggression against the Arab nation and the territories of that nation, began with the Zionist invasion of Palestine in 1917, and that, as a consequence 'the elimination of the consequences of the aggression' must signify the elimination of all such consequences since the beginning of the Zionist invasion and not merely since the June 1967 war."

*Fatah* spokesmen have explained their goal:

> "The operation of liberation is not merely removing an imperialistic base, but what is more important: the extermination of a society (*inqirad Mujtamat*); not only is military defeat the aim in the Palestinian War of Liberation, but the liquidation of the Zionist character of the occupied land, whether in manpower or society."[9]

Article 9 of the Covenant states: "Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine and thus it is the overall strategy, not merely a tactical phase."

In effect the PLO charter reverses the historical relationship between Palestinian and Arab régimes, giving priority to Palestinian independence and statehood. In fact, the whole PLO programme views education, propaganda, historical writing, literature and the arts in terms of Palestinian, not Arab, nationalism.

The PLO Covenant is not, as it has sometimes been called, a lunatic, fanatic, or fringe document. It represents, in my view, the centre, the mainstream of the Palestinian movement and its thought. For the PLO, as Yehoshafat Harkabi concludes, "a compromise is anathema". The ideology of the PLO is totalistic. It is one-sided in the sense that in the Arab-Israeli conflict there is no other side but the Palestinian. Consequently, there is no room for negotiation or compromise.

WHAT HAVE THE Palestinians learned from their experiences in the 1930s, the 1948 war, and other struggles? And what has the PLO achieved since 1967, when it came into its own?

As soon as the guns of 1967 were stilled, it resorted to a different, more protracted, but still consistent policy. *Fatah* now began a guerrilla war of attrition and raiding in Israel's newly-acquired occupied territories in the West Bank and Gaza. The objective was the "liquidation" or "uprooting" of Zionism, through "a war of liberation in the territories". However, the Israeli security forces consistently stymied Palestinian guerrilla operations, and finally ousted the PLO to Jordan, on the other side of the river. In addition, the Israel Defence Force carried out reprisals against Palestinian inhabitants who had cooperated with the PLO. Once again, Palestinian nationalism had taken the military route, this time in terror attacks, and had been once again defeated.

The PLO's expulsion and its failure to build bases on the West Bank gave rise to a frustrated radicalism within its ranks. Led by George Habash—Arafat's major rival, the PLO's leading Marxist, and the leader of the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)—the PLO now resorted to hijackings, and plots to overthrow the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan's King Hussein.

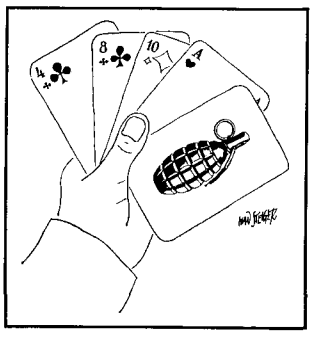
For Habash, "Palestine" meant what it did to Jabotinsky and Begin—"both sides of the Jordan River". Jordan began to take on the aspects of a strategic base for *Fatah* guerrillas and, for Habash, the base for the realisation of a complete Palestine.

Under the heavy political influence of Habash, the PLO in 1970 rejected the peace mission of UN Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, backed by UN Resolution 242. Instead, the PLO hijacked Swissair, TWA, and BOAC planes, forcing them to land in Jordan, as preliminaries to a direct attack on the Jordanian government. The PLO directly challenged Hussein (with the help of Syrian forces), and vowed to "liberate" Northern Jordan, where the planes had landed.

Hussein's reaction was swift and violent. After nine days of fighting (1-9 September 1970) in Amman and Irbid, 3,400 PLO fighters had been killed, while the PLO had been expelled from its base in Jordan, and forced to move into Lebanon. Hussein had help from Israel and the United States, with Israel providing air cover for the Jordanian Army, and President Nixon supporting the Jordanian action in collaboration with Israel.

Once again, the PLO had been denied, and had suffered a compelling setback. But observers began to detect at this point a curious irony coming into play. The more the PLO resorted to force and terror, and the more defeats it suffered, the higher rose its prestige. In the wake of military disaster, it won considerable political and propaganda victories which, in turn, led to the PLO becoming almost another Arab state, not to mention an organisation whose financial base rivalled that of established Arab nations.

## 5. *Arafat's Heyday*



THE PLO was now a force of its own in the Arab and the Third Worlds; and it gained legitimacy in certain quarters of the Western world, among liberal groups, media, intellectuals, politicians and academicians . . . so much so that Arafat could make what he must have felt was a triumphant appearance at the United Nations (on 12 November 1974). Wearing his guerrilla uniform, he strode in flamboyantly, bedecked with a pistol-and-holster at his side. "I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun", he said, and then proceeded to outline the his-

[9] *Fatah Yearbook* (1968), p. 39; quoted in Harkabi, *The Palestinian Covenant*, pp. 47-48.

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tory of the Palestinian national movement and the history of the PLO. He was rather careful to omit references to the objectives of the PLO Covenant, but, if anyone was curious, they were readily available in the UN Library.

Many cheered Arafat's appearance, especially the Third World delegations. One American commentator was not enamoured. As George Will wrote in the *Washington Post* (15 November 1974):

> "The PLO, like the Nazi Party in 1930, is an army without a nation. Arafat, like Hitler in 1930, is a dictator without a state. And the poor Palestinians, who do not even have a country, already have a dictatorship administered by a terrorist."

According to Will's analysis:

> "Arafat, like Hitler, is a romantic racialist, not a nationalist. His pan-Arab dreaming, like Hitler's pan-German 'Aryan' dreaming, consists of the rubbish theories of the half-educated, theories that are almost comical when they are not swimming in the head of a man who has a machine-gun in his hand. These theories are more real to Arafat than mundane boundary disputes. . . . Like Hitler, Arafat knows how to nourish the illusions of appeasers. In his UN speech he promised that there will be no bloodshed if Israel is dismantled. He was not droll enough to announce that he was making his 'last territorial claim' in the Middle East. . . .
>
> Arafat insists: 'Boundaries don't matter, I keep saying.' But people bent on appeasement will keep thinking they can deal with him by cutting a deal, by tinkering with boundaries. . . . They don't know a hate-inspired racialist when they see one standing at the UN podium with a holster on his hip."

Such cold and critical voices were rare in those days of Arafat's ascendancy. The liberal-Left (including the Jewish liberal-Left) appeared to join the PLO's international campaign, abetted by editorial writers and protest movements. An international coalition had formed, expressing concern for Palestinian rights, and focusing on the PLO as the champion of those rights.

This involved a willingness to ignore and to be sedulously indifferent to the contents of the PLO charter, the PLO's devotion to the destruction of Israel, its adamancy in refusing to recognise Israel, to compromise and negotiate, and the appalling cost of the PLO's terrorist activities and military campaigns.

Military failure, paradoxically, seemed to gain the PLO its greatest diplomatic victory. At long last, the Palestinian nationalist movement had arrived. The further removed the PLO from fulfilment of its goals, the more prestige it gained in the Arab world, and the sounder and more affluent its political and financial situation.

In terms of the Arab world, its real victory came at the Arab summit conference (in Rabat, from October-November 1974), when it was declared that the PLO was the only Arab party which could negotiate the fate of the Palestinians. This amounted to an historic triumph for the Palestinian nationalist movement, and after four decades finally seemed to rescue it from the grip of the old Pan-Arabism. At the Rabat conference, Arab leaders were forced to recognise the PLO's independence.

THE PLO'S MOST REMARKABLE achievement, is, of course, in the diplomatic arena: it has almost twice as many embassies as the Israelis (103 against 57). This is quite apart from its political propaganda offices in the major Western capitals and throughout the Arab, the Moslem, and the Third Worlds. The PLO has also founded several major information and historical institutes—in Beirut, in Kuwait, and in Cairo—whose major function is to assert "the Palestinian personality", its identity, and its aspirations.

It publishes three daily newspapers in Beirut, and two in Kuwait; and it finances, as well as controls, the three Arab newspapers published in Jerusalem since the Israeli occupation in 1967. Additionally, it owns a Beirut publishing house (now moved to Kuwait), and one in Cairo. It is deeply involved in the funding and political direction of three out of the seven universities on the West Bank. The PLO Institutes for Historical Studies in Beirut and in Kuwait subsidise Western European and American scholars to write books on "the Palestinian plight", mostly combining anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism.

Last but not least, it is responsible for organising seminars in the United States and Canada as well as in the Arab, Moslem and Third Worlds: the major targets are Jews, Zionism, and Israeli aggression. It has, up till now, constituted a formidable agit-prop international.

THE PLO HAD ALSO BECOME a big business. It was now a billion-dollar organisation and, not surprisingly, the chief financier of international terror. A revealing study by James Adams, a deputy editor of the London *Sunday Times*, estimated that the PLO was worth some three billion dollars (a figure that the experts from *The Economist* increased to somewhere between five and seven billion dollars).

"Building on the Palestinians' natural entrepreneur skills", Adams wrote, "Arafat was first to recognise that a strong financial base was essential if the organisation were to flourish. . . ." Continuous armed militance doesn't come from emotion, anger, and irridentist aspiration alone. It costs huge sums to build a modern terrorist organisation that is militarily capable and effective. Thus, the PLO's financial and banking activities, while primarily financing the purchase of weapons for military operations, also offered the possibility of employment for Palestinians, "created Palestinian camps and bases for survival, provided Palestinian communities with their basic needs and created a nucleus for a Palestinian revolutionary economy". A huge treasury sustained the PLO organisation with its thousands of workers, diplomats, fighters, and terrorists.

A Palestinian financial and banking network was established in Syria, with far-flung connections in the Arab capitals, Switzerland, and Western Europe. The main sources of

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revenue for the PLO, not infrequently obtained through extortion and coercion, are taxation, donations, governmental subventions, and investments. An energetic Palestinian diaspora exists which helps to finance the PLO through its contributions.

To be a member of the PLO is not necessarily to be a starving, fugitive, poverty-ridden Palestinian in a squalid camp. The PLO's "diplomats" include highly-paid civil servants and public-relations men, their earnings approximating to the salaries of Gulf Arab diplomats and bureaucrats. PLO fight-

## *The Deletion of Yasir Arafat*

Amman, Jordan, *11 November 1987*

YASIR ARAFAT **adjusted his glasses, brought the English translation of the Arab summit resolutions right up to his face and then squinted to make sure that his eyes were not deceiving him.**

**"This is a scandal", he declared, his voice quivering with rage and his hand slamming down on the table. "You have a big story."**

**What the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization had just discovered was that the English translation of the Arab League summit resolutions, which were distributed by the Jordanians, failed to include a reference to the PLO as** *"the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."* **The Arabic version of the summit resolutions included the phrase, but for the several hundred American, European and Asian journalists attending the Amman conference it was the English text upon which they would base their reports.**

BY COINCIDENCE, *an American reporter was in Mr Arafat's suite at the Amman Plaza Hotel at the moment he discovered the missing phrase in the English text. The scene provided a rare glimpse of the suspicions that are often at the heart of inter-Arab politics, and particularly Jordanian-PLO relations. It also gave an insight into the sensitivity of Mr Arafat to even the slightest hint that his Arab "brothers" might be trying to undermine his legitimacy.*

*The incident began as the Jordanian television was carrying a news conference by King Hussein, and just at that moment the King was explaining in English that reports about a reconciliation between him and Mr Arafat were "premature".*

*The two men have long been at odds over who should represent the Palestinians in any peace talks.*

*Having come into the room in the middle of King Hussein's remarks about him, Mr Arafat asked in Arabic: "Who is he talking about?"*

*"You", his aides replied. Mr Arafat listened.*

WHILE DECLARING THAT **the PLO was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, King Hussein added that "hopefully" the PLO would be invited to any international Middle East peace conference. The King also casually added that it was not necessarily certain that the PLO would have an independent place at any peace conference, but rather, King Hussein said, the Palestinians might be represented as part of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation—even though the summit resolutions spoke clearly of the PLO taking part on "equal footing" with all other conference delegates.**

**Having heard enough, Mr Arafat suddenly rose and walked into another room.**

WHAT DID HE THINK *about King Hussein's ambiguous remarks? he was asked by a reporter.*

*There was nothing to worry about, said Mr Arafat, and just to emphasise that point he took the reporter's English text of the Arab summit resolutions and began reading aloud from the section detailing what the role of the PLO should be at any international conference.*

*Pointing to the English, he said:*

> **"Here it says, 'under the sponsorship of the United Nations and with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization . . . including the Palestine Liberation Organization. . . .' No, there is something missing."**

*With his finger, Mr Arafat began to tap on the text, while in his other hand he twisted a strand of blue Arab worry-beads.*

*"This is the old one", Mr Arafat said nervously of the English text.*

*"Give me the Arabic version." He went on: "This is bluffing. This is bluffing. They gave you the old one."*

*Then waving the English text in his hand, he asked, "Where did you get this?"*

*"We got it from the Jordanians", said the reporter.*

*"Yes, the Jordanians", said Mr Arafat in a voice ringing with suspicion. "You cannot take from them. You have to take from the Arab League."*

AT THAT POINT **Mr Arafat lifted a black pen from his breast pocket, took the reporter's English text, and wrote in his own longhand the missing words "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people" after the reference to the PLO.**

**A minute later an aide appeared with the Arabic version.**

**"You see, here it is", he exclaimed, pointing to the key phrase which was included in the Arabic version. He then turned his attention back to the English, his anger growing palpably.**

**"This is not the Arab League translation, you have a scoop", he fumed. "The translation is false. We only accept the Arabic text in the Arab League."**

**Did he think this omission was deliberate?**

**"Yes, this is not a joke", said Mr Arafat, once again tapping his finger on the text. "This is not a joke."**

**Then, trying to avoid an open spat with his host, King Hussein, Mr Arafat added: "There are some small people here trying to do something. His Majesty King Hussein was clear, while these small employees. . . ."**

IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE *to find any Jordanian officials who could explain the omission in the English text, which may well have been only an accident, but no one will ever be able to convince Mr Arafat of that.*

*"They are trying to cover up internationally what they failed to do in the conference", said the PLO chairman, who stalked off muttering to his guards, "Yes, yes, it is a scandal."*

*Thomas L. Friedman*
*in* THE NEW YORK TIMES

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ers may shout Marxist and revolutionary slogans, but they are sustained by a commercial-industrial complex of middle-class entrepreneurs.

There appears to be no cash shortage in the PLO banks in Beirut. When necessary, the PLO has placed additional cash in Middle East money-markets to raise the value of the Lebanese lira when it floundered in the wake of the Shia-Palestinian clashes of 1987. Their Palestinian bankers, according to Adams, now maintain a presence in fourteen countries; the bank in Amman is, in some respects, more powerful than the Jordanian government. The PLO managed to finance its retreat from Beirut (purchasing Greek boats), and the exile to Tunisia and other Arab states. It continues to enjoy generous loans from the international banking community. So plush is its financial status that it can afford to help finance the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the IRA in Northern Ireland, the "Red Brigades" in Italy and Japan, and the Papandreou election of 1984—not to mention its own radical offshoots like Abu Nidal, Abu Musa, and other PLO renegades (who are not afraid to continue to engage in the bloody terrorist acts from which the more moderate Arafat now shrinks).

"It is difficult to find a poor Palestinian leader; most have large cars; all have their own homes and some have expensive holiday homes", says James Adams. How, then, do Palestinian leaders reconcile their affluent life with the struggle for an "oppressed nation"? Perhaps the Palestinian *nomenklatura* find the reality of being in the PLO much more comfortable than the reality of any proposed Palestinian state? Adams comes to the following conclusion:

> "Any discussion of the future of the PLO should concentrate on the organisation's evolution from a gang of hoodlums who hijacked planes in the 1960s, into a sophisticated multinational corporation that uses terrorism and sound investment planning in equal measure to achieve its aims. In the same way as Israel will not disappear from any map of the Middle East, the PLO has grown to such a size and is so financially secure that it would be virtually impossible to remove."[10]

BUT WHAT DID diplomatic victories and financial security portend for the PLO and the Palestinian cause? It could not avoid, only facilitate, entanglement with the Arab states, and therefore entailed a further distancing of the movement's ultimate goal, the possibility of a sovereign Palestinian state within its own predetermined boundaries.

In Lebanon, the PLO, continuing to engage in terrorism and "the armed struggle", failed to cut the umbilical cord to the Arab world, however much its actual status in relation to that world had changed. Continued terrorism had the result of limiting the role of Arab states in peace negotiations with Israel, and further dimmed the chances of actually "detaching" the West Bank and Gaza from Israeli rule.[11] King Hussein of Jordan proclaimed that "future peace parleys with Israelis now appear in doubt" (*New York Times*, 29 September 1974). The PLO was armed with a veto power over any Arab action, primarily that of Jordan. Israel, on the other hand, refused to negotiate either directly or indirectly with the PLO. Dependent on Arab states, especially Jordan, for any negotiations, the PLO was not released from bondage to the Arabs.

THERE WAS A SHIFT in the PLO-Arab relationship after Rabat. The newly-gained autonomy meant more terror, more radicalisation. It meant that the PLO was the only Arab force engaged in "the armed struggle"—now transferred to Lebanon where the PLO controlled the Palestinian camps, and constituted to all intents and purposes "a state within a state". What was to happen to Lebanon would also shape the destiny of the PLO. It became embroiled in inter-Arab struggles, including the ideological warfare between Sadat and Gaddafi, between Hussein and Assad of Syria. Various factions of the PLO now allied themselves with different Arab régimes. In spite of Rabat, the PLO reflected the deep divisions and schisms which existed in the Arab world; and the fissures plunged it into ruinous factionalism. The multiplicity of Arab actors and PLO factions was draining the Palestinian energies. Salah Khalaf of the PLO once remarked to a European journalist that all "revolutions conceived in Palestine have aborted in Arab capitals. . . ."[12] They were always torn apart between emotional considerations and those of power politics.

For Arab states, moderate or radical, the PLO was seen as a spearhead of Pan-Arabist ideological fulfilment, which happened to take the shape of Palestinian nationalism. But it continued to symbolise the ideological divide among the various Arab states. So the PLO became the tool for radical régimes and movements geographically far removed from Palestine, such as Iraq and Libya, and other North African states like Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia.

How far does willingness on the part of Arab régimes to "fight for the PLO" extend? More and more, only to rhetoric, propaganda, and some diplomatic pressure in the international arena. Financial aid means they can pay and withdraw, always playing it safe. Since 1967, they have not been overly anxious to fight. In 1982, in the war with Israel in Lebanon, only Syria actually fought the Israelis; and that was for its own strategic considerations, not because of any feeling for the Palestinian cause or for the PLO, which it forthwith proceeded to dismember.

In the Lebanon war, Israeli forces effectively routed the PLO army-in-being, and ousted it from southern Lebanon and its political capital in Beirut. The Israeli action was a consequence of the PLO occupation of southern Lebanon after 1970, where it succeeded in controlling the local Arab Shia population, and for close to a decade harassed the northern Israeli border villages. By 1982, it seemed as if the PLO state within a state—"Fatahland" in southern Lebanon, and its newly-acquired capital, Beirut—had successfully created

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[10] James Adams, *The Finance of Terror* (Simon & Schuster, 1986), pp. 46, 87, 120, 125-6.

[11] Shaul Mishal, *The PLO Under Arafat . . .*, p. 19.

[12] See Aaron David Miller, *The Arab States and the Palestine Question: Between Ideology and Self-Interest* (Praeger Special Studies, 1986), pp. 1, 39, 40.

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a delusory image of itself and of the movement. The PLO Foreign Minister, Farouk Kaddumy, announced, "We are now in a position to hold back the Zionist enemy." It took ten days for the invading Israeli forces to destroy an armed force whose mirage had so systematically been built up between 1972 and 1982. Thus, by September 1982, 5,000 PLO fighters —its political and diplomatic infrastructure—had been expelled from Beirut by Sharon's army. The PLO retreated to refugee camps far from Palestine—as distant as Tunisia, Iraq, and southern Yemen. Five decades after the emergence of Palestinian Arab nationalism, they were as far removed from their promised land as ever. Twenty years after the establishment of the PLO, they were not even within real reach of Israeli territory.

The Arab states, under the guise of a non-existent "Arab League", are repeatedly ready to proclaim numerous "peace" proposals for discussion at endless conferences and international gatherings. Western diplomats conclude that all of this amounts to an exercise in futility.

EACH ARAB state has had its own special position on the Palestinian issue. The most significant is that of Jordan, two-thirds of whose population consists of former Palestinians. Jordan has claims over the lost West Bank, and indeed has never recognised the legitimacy of an independent Palestinian state. Nor has Syria, for whom Palestine means "southern Syria". Would Syria or Jordan establish another state at their own territorial expense?

Yet the idea of Palestine is deeply rooted in Syria's Alawi Ba'ath Party, headed by Assad, which has ruled Syria since 1970. As Aaron David Miller writes, "Involvement in the affairs of Palestine . . . cuts to the core of Syria's self-image as the cradle of Arab nationalism." Syrian involvement makes Syrian claims to "Arab leadership" legitimate; its commitment to "the Palestinian cause" is deeply ingrained in the ruling Alawi ideology.

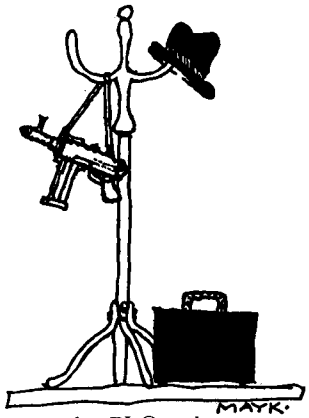
In Egypt, the PLO played a role in Nasser's nationalist and revolutionary commitment, his war against the three-headed monster of "colonialism . . . imperialism . . . and Zionism". With the passing of Nasser and the coming of Sadat and Mubarak, and with the signing of the peace treaty with Israel (27 March 1979), Egypt managed to extricate itself from the Israeli Palestinian struggle. In re-recognising Egypt and renewing its welcome, the Arab world might be approaching a similar extrication.

The assistance of and cooperation by Arab states for the PLO has its dark sides. The "Black September" massacre in Jordan is only one stark example. Assad, while supporting the PLO, has also attacked it; and within Syria itself has created his own version of the PLO, all the while undermining Arafat's leadership.

Over 22 countries support one or another version of the PLO, and this has led to intense fratricide within its ranks. All its various offshoots have their own terror agenda, over which neither Arafat nor the Arab régimes seem to have any control.

What remains is a kind of stand-off. As things are, the PLO can make Arab states and régimes hostage to its ideological aims. The Arab states can, to a degree, determine the extent of PLO independence but not its activities and deeds—which, in turn, cripple their attempts at negotiation and great-power diplomacy. The PLO is in no position to impose on Arab states their military and terrorist agenda; the Arabs are in no position to determine the direction and goals of the PLO's operational structure.

## 6. *The Organisation Men*




HAS THE organisation of the PLO become a goal in and of itself? As Arafat once said (in March 1984), "The liberation of the land is the same as the liberation organisation."[13]

In my view, this may be the key to our understanding of the PLO, its strategy, tactics, behaviour and purpose. The traumas of 1936 and 1947 demonstrated that the Pan-Arab régimes and ideology could serve the PLO only as an emotional, intellectual, and ideological base. Arab support in terms of financial and diplomatic solidarity went only so far; and there would be times when the Arab states would physically turn against them, if it served their purposes (as it did with Syria and Jordan). The PLO came to realise that they were alone in continuing the armed struggle against Israel, a struggle that repeated defeats suggested they could not hope to win.

Thus, the realisation of military impotence and the unreliability of Arab régimes kept the PLO far from their grand designs for "liberating the lost territories" or realising the nationalist hope of an independent Palestinian state.

The supreme accomplishment of Arafat's PLO has been to keep the various factions together in spite of continuous splits. Today, the organisation appears to be engaged as much in defence against its radical splinter groups as against the encroachments of hostile Arab states or Israel.

Faced with all this fissiparous activity, it maintains a rigid, diplomatic posture, for any attempt at compromise, any attempt to circumvent the charter, is fraught with internal danger. Where there is a history of fratricide, it behoves a "band of brothers" to consider their inflexibility. The price of survival is to forgo, as in the past, any historical chance for compromise, and opportunities for diplomatic breakthrough. Attention is given to the integrity of the organisation at the expense of progress toward the ultimate goal of independent statehood. The "olive branch", and with it the realisation of attainable goals, is abjured. It's not power that has come

[13] Quoted in Aaron David Miller, "The PLO and the Peace Process: The Organizational Imperative", *SAIS Review* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1985), p. 95.

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out of the barrel of a gun—only high-priced, high-powered bullets.

Organisational integrity has become paramount, and has rendered the PLO impotent to chart its much vaunted independent course. Even if Arafat wanted to negotiate (as it sometimes appeared), and if Israel were willing, he could not do so because it would mean total organisational disruption. Negotiations would not result in "the end of Israel" but would shake and perhaps topple the PLO. Any type of Israeli-PLO negotiations, or a Palestine irredentism (to paraphrase Walid Khalidi) tantamount to the formation of a sovereign Palestinian state, would not only be unacceptable to Israel, but would be unwelcome news in Arab states like Syria and Jordan.[14]

The PLO's defeat of the 1982 Reagan initiative and of the 1984 Hussein-Arafat agreement (annulled in Algeria in March 1987) speaks to the organisational imperative of the PLO and demonstrates its pre-eminence. To pacify his radicals in this last decade, Arafat has repeatedly sabotaged diplomatic initiatives, including his own.

At the 1987 Algerian meeting of the PLO, unity was achieved—by radicalisation. Five years after his expulsion from Beirut—years of isolation, buffeted from friend to foe, without and within—Arafat mended his fences with his most vociferous rivals (George Habash and Naif Hawatma) by scrapping the 1984 agreement with King Hussein, which had found support both with President Reagan and with Shimon Peres.

A PLO spokesman said that, after Algiers, "The major groups [within the PLO] realised more clearly that the PLO's position and standing was being eroded and the split among us being used to weaken the PLO." Thus, "many organisations [of the PLO] are ready for unification as a defensive response to the liquidation of the PLO . . . " (*New York Times*, 20 April 1987, p. 9). A new secretariat was established, giving rival factions some control over PLO operations. Arafat sacrificed the operational side of his *Fatah* monopoly, including guerrilla and terror operations, to the radicals. As George Habash said, Arafat's organisational triumph in Algiers had reaffirmed the PLO's "armed struggle"; which meant that the PLO maintained its rigid stance of terror and rejectionism.

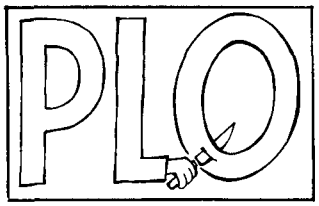
The abolition of the 1984 agreement with Hussein clearly demonstrates the course of the PLO for the 1990s. I suspect that Arafat's trials and tribulations are far from over. His chief Arab rival, Assad of Syria, was not pleased by the show of unity in Algiers, and still controls any re-entry by Arafat into Lebanon. King Hussein, if Israel is willing, will meet the Israelis in international conference without Arafat or the PLO. The actual cause of Palestine—be it autonomy or independence—will still be sacrificed. The autonomy of the organisation is all. . . .

Arafat's goal—the maintenance of organisational integrity at all costs—has been detrimental to the cause. In effect, the organisation has *become* the longed-for state; the real, physical state-in-being is as far away as ever.[15] The organisation is a home and a household which guarantees prestige, livelihood, and a leverage over factional and dissident family quarrels.

The organisation, in and of itself, has become paramount. As long as the Covenant and its goals are not abandoned or changed, the organisation has a still-impassioned reason for its political survival, though the realisation of these goals grows ever more distant. Arafat, in the end, is a survivalist, an organisation man, not a statesman. Aware of the disparity between the dream and the realities of the West Bank, he prefers to stick to his utopian, purist charter, which, with its unattainable goals, maintains the active integrity of the movement.

## *Government-in-Exile?*

*Beirut*




THE *Palestine Liberation Organisation in a last-minute decision last night [7 January 1988] appeared to have cancelled plans to discuss forming a provisional Government-in-Exile. Its move added weight to speculation about irreconcilable differences over the issue.*

*The point of the creation of a Palestinian Government-in-Exile was made clearly by a PLO spokesman in the Iraqi capital on Monday. Earlier this week Yasir Arafat was quoted by the Kuwaiti newspaper "Al-Rai al-Aam" as saying that the Central Council meeting would produce a "crucial announcement".*

*Mr Arafat did not elaborate, but his remarks were published almost simultaneously with an interview with "The Washington Post" in which he favoured the idea of forming a Government-in-Exile.*

THE IDEA OF **creating a provisional Palestinian Government-in-Exile was first formulated by the late President Sadat of Egypt in 1972, but it met widespread opposition, including that of Mr Arafat.**

**It was then rejected as a proposal bound to encourage concessions in favour of Israel and too soft an option for a revolutionary movement committed to armed struggle.**

**The years have now provided an adequate opportunity for a rethink. The idea, however, still faces enormous opposition, given the dimensions of the political transformation that it would mean for the PLO, whose *raison d'être* could cease along with the current concept of Palestinian armed struggle.**

THE TIMES (*London*)

WHAT OF THE REAL WORLD of the West Bank, where real Palestinians live? The most realistic approach would be for the PLO to anchor itself in the West Bank, which is after all its centre, the core of the homeland. But here, too, an ironic dichotomy exists.

Although most of the West Bank leadership share the PLO's goals of statehood and self-determination, their particular concerns, their local aspirations and motives, have

[14] Walid Khalidi, "Thinking the Unthinkable: A Sovereign Palestine State", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 56, No. 4, 1978, pp. 695-713.

[15] Aaron David Miller, "The PLO, A Retrospective: The Arab and Israeli Dimension" (unpublished paper, Washington, D.C., 1987), pp. 19, 97.

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made for an uneasy relationship. The West Bank Palestinians tended to focus on short-term, day-to-day events and needs, especially on the hope for an end to Israeli occupation. They were not engaged in long-run political and military struggles, which were left to the bombastic PLO. The tension between the "homeland" and the organisation reflected these separate urgencies.

The West Bank Palestinians were acutely aware that continued terrorism and military struggle only prolonged Israeli military occupation. In the words of one of the editorials in *Al Quds*, a West Bank Jerusalem newspaper:

> "If we must wait for the PLO's military solution . . . the land will no longer be a land, the homeland no longer a homeland, and no trace of the people of the land will be seen. . . ."

The West-Bankers have achieved a measure of political independence since they were liberated by the Israel Defence Force from Jordanian rule in 1967, and since 1976 they have run free, their municipal elections often proclaiming radical PLO ideas and producing pro-PLO leaders. Participation of Palestinians in local elections has been high. The PLO, while rejecting elections, modified its attitude toward the West-Bankers, realising that it had an opening for political recognition. Yet "the West Bank's unwillingness to sacrifice its local interests and embrace the PLO's political goals demonstrated the persistence of divergent views with the PLO. . . ."[16]

In 1978, Prime Minister Begin offered the Palestinians an "Autonomy Plan", which was incorporated into the Camp David accords. The PLO rejected the plan, thus further straining relations with its "homeland", as did the rejection of Peres's plan for an international conference under whose auspices Israel, Jordan, and West Bank Palestinians would freely and unconditionally negotiate. (It was turned down by the PLO, in Algiers, in April 1987.)

Both the Autonomy Plan and the Peres-Hussein conference had the result of taking the PLO out of the action and allowing the West-Bankers to negotiate in their absence. Once again, the PLO's organisational imperative reverberated negatively on the Palestinians, and on the prospect of a move towards Palestinian independence.

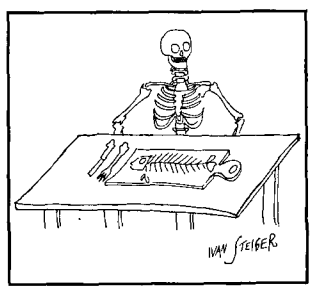
Continued procrastination and the PLO's instantaneous rejection gave Begin's Agriculture Minister, Ariel Sharon, an opportunity aggressively and effectively to expand Israel's settlement policy: the number jumped from 34 to 98 in the space of five years, with the Jewish population reaching 30,000 by 1983.[17]

The PLO found itself in a "no-win situation" between the Organisation and the Homeland. It is a hot-and-cold relationship, much like the PLO's relations with the Arab world at large. The PLO has attempted to prevail over the West Bank, but "*Fatah* was not completely successful in imposing its position on the West Bank political leadership".[18] The PLO's organisational imperative continues to beleaguer its Palestinian utopia.

The great ingathering of the various factions of the PLO in Algeria in March 1987 ended with the triumph of the radical and terror-oriented leaders. Yasir Arafat remained in charge, but it was a hollow victory, for it meant that he had cast in his lot with the PLO extremists and those PLO members supported by the Soviets and the Syrians.

The PLO was put together again, and arranged a great show of unity: not since it was routed from Lebanon had it demonstrated such cohesiveness. But PLO solidarity is the solidarity of the gun. It remained whole, but at a price for the prospects of Palestinian independence.

## 7. *High on the "F" Scale*




No better expression of the latent aspirations of all Palestinians, in the homeland and the diaspora, can be found than in an opinion poll of West-Bank/Gaza Palestinians, which dovetails, in its all-or-nothing anti-Zionism, with the PLO Charter.

A cross-section of 1,024 people, many of them evidently politically aware, and many obviously students, was polled in the summer of 1986. The poll findings were strongly in favour of the PLO (some 80% said it was "the sole and legitimate representative for Palestinians"); but, more importantly, the results showed a bent for violent solutions to political problems, and an unflagging hostility not only to Israel, but also to the West and to democratic tendencies.[19] This flies in the face of the conventional wisdom of Western champions of the "oppressed" Palestinians, who cling to the belief that if only the Palestinian people were given a chance to speak, were left to themselves, and had their own way in the West Bank and Gaza, they would create a freedom-loving state, and the reign of terror, violence, murder, kidnapping, and bombing would be at an end.

The results of the poll indicate that the Palestinian Arabs are closer to Abu Nidal, Abu Musa, and Abu Abbas (of *Achille Laura* notoriety) than to any other Arab political leaders. It showed that 71.1% of those interviewed supported Yasir Arafat, but it was the old Arafat—the gun-toting terrorist, not the media-honed new Arafat—whom they supported. The Palestinians were also strongly in favour of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, and the efforts of the fanatic Shi'is of southern Lebanon. Moderation was not the word here—King Hussein of Jordan received support from only 3.1%.

The majority of Palestinians supported violence against Jews and Arabs, in effect condoning the massacres in Istan-

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[16] Shaul Mishal, *The PLO Under Arafat . . .* , pp. 27, 97, 118.

[17] Meron Benvenisti, *Report on West Bank Data* (Jerusalem, 1983), p. 40.

[18] Shaul Mishal, *The PLO Under Arafat . . .* , p. 148.

[19] The poll was sponsored by *Al Fajr* (the East Jerusalem Arab newspaper connected with the PLO, by *Newsday* in New York, and by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. See Amos Perlmutter, "Disquieting Palestinian Poll", *The Washington Times*, 17 September 1986, p. 2D.

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bul, the hijacking in Karachi. They endorsed the car-bombing in Lebanon which killed 241 US Marines in 1983. They rejected (80%) United Nations Resolution 242 (which is still the only legal and diplomatic instrument for peace in the Middle East), along with the Camp David process and the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty.

The poll is disquieting, even shocking. Its hard-line, uncompromising results clearly demonstrate that Palestinian Arab society is, as one despairing observer put it, "violent, anti-democratic, anti-Western, and anti-Semitic, that it supports the likes of Yasir Arafat, the Ayatollah Khomeini, Abu Nidal, and Colonel Gaddafi. . . . It means that if a Palestinian state ever comes into existence, it will be tyrannical, fanatical, violent, terroristic, and repressive, on the models of Iran, Libya, and Syria."

MANY YEARS AGO, a team of sociologists published a book called *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), which delineated the nature of the "fascistic" and "proto-fascistic" character, charted on an "F" scale. All of the characteristics of a high "F" mark are clearly seen in the poll conducted in the West Bank and Gaza.

What emerges most clearly is that the Palestinians, like many of their radical Arab brothers, flatly reject the existence of the state of Israel. They not only spurn the idea of an interim solution to the Palestinian problem (such as autonomy), but—not mentioning Israel by name—call for the establishment of a nationalist "democratic" state in all of Palestine—a euphemism for a "liberal" Arab annihilation of Israel. The sobering truth is that we are a long way from a solution to the Palestinian problem so long as Palestinians feel so strongly that terror is the only solution.

One historian's judgment is, I find, reflective and accurate.

> "Twenty years after the Six Day war [A. D. Miller writes] the PLO is no closer to actually regaining an inch of Palestine than when it spoke of the liberation of Palestine in the 1960s. Although the PLO's own miscalculations and blunders explain much of its failure, the harsh environment in which it has operated goes a long way toward explaining its current predicament. In short, the entire Palestinian national movement is far too dependent on its Arab allies and far too vulnerable to its Israeli adversary to have much hope of accomplishing its *territorial* objectives."[20]

After 1967, the Palestinian issue really became two separate sub-conflicts. One was between key Arab states and the revolutionary and secular Palestinian leadership, the second between Israel and the PLO. In both of these contests, the dynamism of the PLO was able to score significant gains. But, overall, the Palestinian movement has been dealing with its friends and its enemies from a position of weakness. Indeed, it lost the military struggle with its Israeli enemy and is in the process of losing the political battle with its important Arab friends.

The PLO has never really had a credible military option against Israel (and, in the foreseeable future, never will). Whatever other purposes the "armed struggle" served, it did little to give the Palestinians a better position in their confrontation with Israel. Nor have the PLO's efforts to isolate Israel in the international community, despite a good measure of success, really amounted to anything very decisive. The Palestinians have never come close to marshalling the kind of political power necessary to force the great powers to pressure Israel into territorial concessions or even to drive a wedge between Israel and the USA. Banking on yet another war or on an upheaval in Israel to accomplish such ends is not a policy.

To hold out for an independent and sovereign state, and indeed for the total liberation of Palestine, will preserve "the pursuit of the revolution" and the spirit of "the movement". It is unlikely to lead to the achievement of any of a people's territorial goals.

[20] Aaron David Miller, "The PLO: A Retrospective . . .", pp. 21-22.

## Keeper

Mother's fur coats,
silver teapot and velvet
boxes of broken earrings.

Aunt Ann's crackle-glass lamp
with its patterned parchment shade,
her mahogany bookcase.

Daddy's volumes of Jewish Thoughts,
"A Hermit in the Himalayas",
those plaid plus-fours.

A faded suitcase, corded,
the sort you give a schoolboy,
full of Harry's notebooks.

Albums of glossy photos.
The last smiled dimmed,
since I heard about cousin Fanny.

I see the family face
break through the surface
of Grandpa's speckled mirror

and hardly recognise myself.
Every object
claims me as its keeper,

souvenirs of joy
and anger I'm not sure whether
I want to cherish or destroy.

*Ruth Fainlight*

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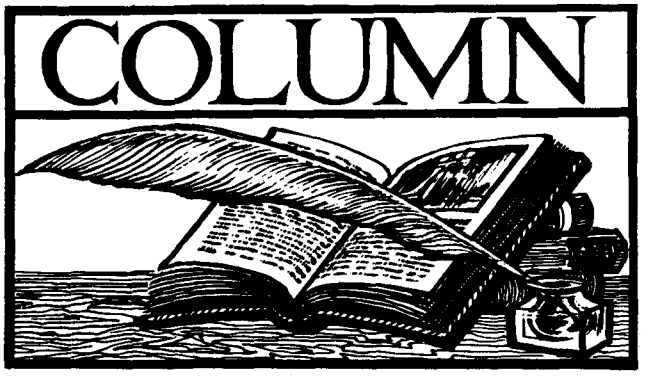


"CLUTCHING at each other we spun about, pitched this way and that, our bale of packages leaping at us, pounding at us. We collided, we gripped, we were torn asunder—our heads met, and the whole universe burst into fiery darts and stars! On the earth we should have smashed each other a dozen times, but on the moon luckily for us our weight was only one-sixth of what it is terrestrially, and we fell very mercifully. I recall a sensation of utter sickness, a feeling as if my brain were upside down within my skull, and then. . . ."

H. G. Wells, 68 years early: the arrival, in 1901, of *The First Men in the Moon*. The French have a neat word for it—*alunissage*, by analogy with *atterrissage*; but "mooning" in English is hardly the counterpart of "landing". Perhaps it describes Wells's dazed readers: a small step for the writer, a giant sleep for mankind.

As fantasies go—and they travel light-years in the cinema—Wells's novel is admittedly less soporific than one might suppose. I especially like his Edwardian spaceship, and the fast-forward growth of his lunar plants. But real space exploration is still liable to evoke what Jonathan Miller once called "a certain sort of bored astonishment". I remember my own reactions when Neil Armstrong came down the ladder: how dare he clump about on the White Goddess? The earth, photographed from up there, looked disturbingly like a rubber ball in streaky colours; and the moon, that distant mirror, looked in close-up like a barren earth. Even local mountains we domesticate with placating names—Haycock, Hen Comb, High Seat, Grey Friar. Windswept lifeless escarpments and plains of lunar dust seem still more forbidding and tedious, for all the rhetoric from NASA.

Public lack of interest had been evident from the start. Soon after President Kennedy announced his $40 billion project to put Americans on the moon, 58% of those responding opposed it, with 33% in favour. In only one poll, taken in 1965, did those in favour—45%—outnumber the 42% who were opposed; and by 1967 support had dropped to 34%. After the initial lunar landings and a spurt of interest world-wide, American enthusiasm cooled again, and Congressional opposition caused the last three lunar missions to be cancelled. Notwithstanding President Reagan's keenness on SDI, the glamour of space has faded, even in the cinema. Mel Brooks's *Spaceballs* was an attempt to parody *Star Wars* and similar fictions; but in the face of growing indifference they had long been parodying themselves.

"Why put men on the moon when we can't cure cancer/feed Ethiopia/clean up Miami/fund the Health Service/save the rain forests/get rid of the common cold? . . ." The question is commonsensical; but it hasn't stopped the onward and upward rush into space. In a book published nearly 20 years ago, I pointed out that by 1967 more than a thousand man-made objects and fragments were already in orbit, including 300 artificial satellites, a third of them still transmitting signals. At that time, 150 tons of miscellaneous hardware were rotating in the skies. Since then the rush has continued. By the end of 1986, the United States alone had developed about 1,000 satellites and carried out 54 manned flights. The Soviet Union, whose space hardware has a shorter shelf-life, had put into orbit more than 1,800 *Kosmos* satellites; and between 1971 and 1982 it launched seven *Salyut*-series space stations, followed in 1986 by a new *Mir* station of similar size, with six docking ports to which modular station segments can be attached.

Nor is the race only to the swift and the superpowers. Since 1970, Japan has run 15 scientific and experimental satellites, and since 1975, 20 more for practical use. Between 1970 and 1986, China launched 19 satellites. India has two large and several smaller satellites in orbit; and other countries, including Brazil, seem likely to follow suit.

Much of this information is assembled in a new joint report compiled, with expert assistance, by the leading foreign policy research institutes in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands, published in English by the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House.[1] It forms the world background to the Institutes' study of what Europe is doing, and could do, to hold its own in an increasingly crowded field.

Briefly, a score of satellites has been launched in collaboration, most of them through the European Space Agency (ESA). Nationally, Britain and France have launched 15 each; Germany 9; Italy 5; the Netherlands and Sweden 2 each; and Spain 1.

If these sound a little like football or baseball results, the comparison is apt. Competition does characterise Europe's efforts; and because so many countries insist on going it alone, Europe as a whole remains in the third division of the world league. With Japan coming up fast, Europe might even finish fourth.

THAT RISK IS MORE than a matter of international prestige. Looking at space programmes, one has a curious double impression. On the one hand, the scene is extremely primitive: it has a frontier or Klondike feel, with a minimum of law and a maximum of pioneer spirit. When will a manned space station sprout its first honky-tonk saloon? At the same time, of course, the technology is at the cutting edge of innovation—as revolutionary as the first automobile or aircraft, and as likely to transform human lives for good or ill.

Already, satellites play an important and accepted part in national and international affairs. We're all accustomed to satellite weather reports and photographs in television fore-

[1] *Europe's Future in Space: A Joint Policy Report.* Royal Institute of International Affairs/Routledge & Kegan Paul, £9.95.



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casts. We welcome live TV broadcasts of events on the far side of the world; and viewers with a dish antenna can already receive from satellites a wide variety of programmes, many of them—sadly—schlock. Sailors, not all of them professional, use "satnav" to confirm their dead reckoning. Ordinary telephone calls are regularly bounced off space hardware. "In many European countries", the joint report calculates, "the savings resulting from satellite use for telephone links often exceed the total cost of national civilian space programmes."

Less homely but more insistent are the security uses to which space is already being put. In a recent study of "space espionage", the veteran space-watcher Professor William E. Burrows recalls with approval some remarks made by President Lyndon Johnson to a small group in Nashville two decades ago:

> "I wouldn't want to be quoted on this, but we've spent thirty-five or forty billion dollars on the space program. And if nothing else had come out of it except the knowledge we've gained from space photography, it would be worth ten times what the whole program has cost. Because tonight we know how many missiles the enemy has and, it turned out, our guesses were way off. We were doing things we didn't need to do. We were building things we didn't need to build. We were harboring fears we didn't need to harbor. . . ."[2]

Burrows applies this argument to the present, contradicting Defense Department officials who deny that space surveillance can effectively monitor arms control. His case seems convincing; but even if it were not, no Administration could afford to give up space surveillance, however imperfect—not least because it includes electronic eavesdropping.

Nor are all the uses of space research so mundane. Remote sensing makes possible specialised mapping—not only of land masses, but also of the sea. It can locate and evaluate many resources; and in this it could be of use to less developed countries. Space science is still exploring the solar system; and near-weightlessness ("micro-gravity conditions") may permit experiments which will later find applications on earth. The non-stick pan, that most famous terrestrial offshoot of space research, is a useful if comic example, not a freak.

THERE ARE MANY sound reasons, then, for everyone's wanting to join in this new Gold Rush. But whereas a pan, a sled, some huskies, and a fur coat were all that an old-time prospector needed, the Klondike in the sky is a more costly destination. Quite early on, Europeans realised that it made sense to work together. In 1964, after four years' preparation, they set up ELDO, the European Launcher Development Organisation, and ESRO, the European Space Research Organisation.

For many years, launching proved difficult. ELDO faced repeated problems, and Britain eventually withdrew from it. ESRO's first satellites had to be launched by American vehicles—sometimes on American conditions. At length, while agreeing to develop *Spacelab* as part of the US post-*Apollo* programme, the Europeans dropped ELDO and set up the European Space Agency, by a treaty signed in 1975. Its first satellites, for meteorology and experimental telecommunications, were launched in 1977 and 1978. It has also put in orbit five scientific satellites, several communications satellites, and the Halley's Comet intercept, *Giotto*. *Ariane*, the French-designed European launcher, made the first of its flights in 1979.

On the face of it, and given the notorious snags involved in any multinational endeavour, all this looks impressive. For an investment of less than one-tenth the annual US figure, and with only 12% of the US numbers involved in space activities, the Europeans have developed scientific, technical, industrial, and managerial skills, which on their smaller scale match those of NASA and its associated industries. Six European astronauts have been into space: two from France, three from Germany, and one from the Netherlands.

Yet, as the authors of the joint report point out, the European achievement is not only small-scale: it is also patchy. Its defence aspects are national and not always mutually compatible; and within the collaborative sector, while space science and launchers have been successful, the results are less satisfactory in the field of "applications" satellites and marketing, and worse still in the "ground segment", notably in receiving stations and switching systems, where Japan is well in the lead.

[2] *Deep Black: The Secrets of Space Espionage*. By WILLIAM E. BURROWS. Bantam Press, £14.95.

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In practical terms, the joint report urges action on a number of fronts. *Ariane* 4 and 5, it argues, should be turned into cost-effective launchers to meet the competition from China and the USSR. Retrievable spacecraft should be developed by Esa. Satellites should be established for intelligence-gathering, data relay, and monitoring. Europe should take part in the *Columbus* programme as a step towards its own space station, and should develop industrial and scientific space platforms. Ground facilities should be part of an integrated European system; markets should be liberalised and joint industrial efforts encouraged. Finally, science and its applications should be given more government support.

Underlying all these practical recommendations is the conviction that the toughest problems are not technical, but political.

> "There are no insurmountable obstacles to maintaining and improving Europe's performance in space. Nothing is needed that cannot be built upon existing assets. . . . Different perceptions and priorities, in the various European nations, are part of the problem. Should the required qualitative jump in space activities be made only by some European countries, leaving the others behind, the outcome would probably not improve Europe's international competitiveness."

This last tactful sentence would seem to be aimed at Britain. Why it should be is made clear by another Chatham House report, which appeared towards the end of 1987, when the British contribution to Esa was being reviewed. Written by Chatham House's Director, Sir James Eberle, and by the Director of its West European Programme, Helen Wallace, this stated bluntly that "Britain cannot expect to retain an effective capability in space at the current level of engagement." The British National Space Centre, set up in 1985, faced "the handicaps of incoherence" in existing policy-making procedures, especially in the administrative separation between civil and military concerns. The habits of secrecy and hermetic procedures made its task more difficult.

Most obvious of all, however, was the fact that Britain could not go it alone; and as a result its policies had been torn between national, transatlantic, and European priorities.

> "Britain has a small national programme in the civilian and military fields, a useful civilian involvement in Esa and a substantial military reliance on US sources in lieu of direct British involvement in order to support a global foreign policy and nuclear capabilities. So far the three legs have been able to support a reasonably balanced programme, but their continued solidity cannot be taken for granted."[3]

Perhaps for fear of protesting too much, the Chatham House report did no more than call for some policy decision to shift the emphasis as among the three legs. But its main undertow seemed to be towards greater involvement in Europe:

> "Britain's reputation as a partner in space, especially in Europe, has often been seen as hesitant and half-hearted. . . . The British have not sought to play in any sense a leadership role in Europe or to jostle for parity with the other major space powers. . . . In the European context British influence is substantially less weighty than French, an obvious point, but also perhaps now than German or latterly Italian."

To a veteran of past debates, both transatlantic and European, one likely conclusion is ominous. It looks as if Europe and Britain may be making in space the same mistakes they have made in terrestrial matters. Europeans, by uniting too slowly, have seen their industries outpaced by Japanese technology and their security jeopardised by American impatience. Britons, by neglecting Europe too long, have had to accept *faits accomplis*. In space, they may have to accept the rank of lieutenant instead of captain.

And all for want of—what? H. G. Wells had the answer, when he watched his hero Cavor, "a short, round-bodied, thin-legged little man, with a jerky quality in his motions", meet the terrible fate that *hubris* had in store. He was an eccentric genius—an inventor—an idealist: not unlike his creator.

> "One seems to see him away there amidst his blue-lit apparatus intently signalling us to the last, all unaware of the curtain of confusion that drops between us; all unaware, too, of the final dangers that even then must have been creeping upon him. His disastrous lack of vulgar common sense had utterly betrayed him."

*Absit omen.*

*M*

[3] *British Space Policy and International Collaboration.* By James Eberle and Helen Wallace. Royal Institute of International Affairs/Routledge & Kegan Paul, £6.95. See also *United Kingdom Space Policy.* By the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology. HMSO, £7.00.

## Massage

Each goose locks to the nozzle: a pipeline;
greased maize coaxed the length of the neck.
Walnuts crack, deliver their oil. The pig
is on a lead, snouting in the leaf-mulch.
The hand that showed a razor to the goose
pats delicate truffle bruises on the meat.

*Paul Munden*

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*Pamela Lewis*

# Eilat

## Solomon Loved Many Women

A daughter danced
on the doorstep
and we took flight—
landed in the desert
where a small night wind
flirted with the women—
hair blown across faces,
they looked towards beds
still an hour away.
Waking in a concrete hive
awash with pleasure, there was honey
for breakfast and not one flower
in the view from the window.
Blue, blue the pool and the marina,
the gulf a gulf between two countries.
For two days the north wind blew flags rigid,
on the third a gold sun held court and fountains played.

## Piano Bar

On a pale marble floor
smaller than my dining table,
couples dance; one or two,
at the most four pairs
enact their life story,
accompanied by the piano
and a hint of electronic keyboard.
Health, wealth and age
add up to a maturity
that matches the music;
thickened bodies, keeping time,
move with the grace of youth.
Translating body language
in several tongues,
I learn more watching
than if I had invited eight
to dine round my mahogany.

## Hai-Bar

The biblical wildlife reserve
is a simple entertainment.
Half a dozen species, openly
acknowledged to be imported
from foreign zoos, live at peace.
An opportunist Sabra ostrich
peers eyeball to camera
through the open bus window
(Please do not Feed the Ostrich),
the highlight of a winter morning.
Here the water table is high
and acacia flourish troubled only by parasites;
mistletoe seems a lot more than two weeks away.
A vulture sits alone on a branch looking well,
here where four lands meet only on a map
no man can be seen.
It is the Sabbath.

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## As Beautiful as the Full Moon

The Queen of Sheba crossed this valley,
the desert floor flat as a matzo.
She might have lost a wrought hairpin
that can still be heard
falling in the silence.
About to say the right thing
for mid-morning, mid-December,
looking up at a blue sky—
about at the red mountains—
forwards at the named natural formations—
it was a mistake to look down,
to be standing on the one spot
where someone had dropped a three-inch hinge.
Resisting picking it up,
opening it and listening to it creak,
was a diversion that diminished wonder to curiosity.
What careless carpenter had passed by and when?

## King Solomon's Palace

Each lift designed to carry
up to thirteen passengers,
here no one minds about superstition,
the source just up the road.
Twelve storeys and as many landings,
a calendar, the picture changing—
flickering, floor by similar floor.
Brightly-clad holidaymakers do not reflect;
face forward and chat, ignore the décor.
The hotel a memorial to an old craft,
everywhere red metal gleams covered
in words and pictures for the observant.
Out in the rift the copper mines sleep,
kept in order, old and new of interest.
A solitary car stops at the visitors' centre.
Enlightened tourists speeding away drive past spoils
leaving not a trace of themselves.

## The Lift Doors

At minus one four bronzed women stand,
heavy breasted and only lightly draped.
Ready to deliver you from womb to room,
four women doomed to perpetual violation
at the touch of a button, the merest whim,
rent down the middle constantly,
giving multiple birth at any stage.
I doubt whether the men going up or down
pause to appreciate the symbolism—
entering a lift and ignoring art.
I managed an electronic delivery of a girl,
adult and fully clothed in summer cottons.
Here, where the sun sets in a few minutes,
the evenings are long, the nights short.
Four women rest for a few quiet hours
always ready to rise to any occasion.

## Town Centre

Parking the car and getting out—
treading on to something brown
and yielding is not unusual.
Looking down I was surprised,
looking up amused (and nearly stepped
into the path of the next car).
Date palms rustled in the night wind,
a light sweater enough for December.
The ground littered with dropped fruits,
full and ripe they fall, are squashed.
Those left hanging dry and wizened,
high and dusty, lamplit by street lights.
Tonight in a man-made oasis
living felt like living.
This was an illusion,
the dates a metaphor
to be eaten a thousand times.

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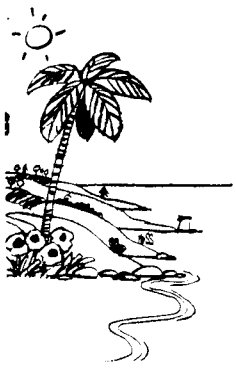
# NOTES & TOPICS

## Paris Notebook

### *Report from the South Pacific—By Jean-François Revel*



By issuing repeated denunciations of nuclear deterrence the Soviet Union has very often managed to divert attention away from conventional wars. Somewhere in the world, such wars have never ceased since 1945. Diminutively labelled "regional conflicts" and as such vaguely consigned to the periphery of things, they have nevertheless on occasion altered "the correlation of forces" and redistributed "zones of influence" to very much greater effect than any missile deal.

While their right hand was signing the notorious Salt 1 and Salt 2 Treaties with the West, with their left hand the Soviets were installing themselves in Viet Nam, Cambodia, and Laos. With its gaze fixed on *SS-20*s and *Pershings*, the West has allowed the Soviets to penetrate Afghanistan and set up several satellite states in Africa—with more, one fears, on the way. In order to resolve the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, the United States handed the USSR what had no doubt been Moscow's real objective all along: a promise not to overthrow Castro.

But there have also been expansions without war. The part of the world where the USSR has most recently succeeded in shifting its military presence and its political interventions from the background into the foreground is the South Pacific. This offensive, accomplished in the space of a few years, has been the more masterly for not having involved a single confrontation so far. Moscow, of course, has never taken very kindly to being opposed.

Nor, indeed, to having its advances noticed; in fact, its modesty in this respect is unequalled. To take an example, no one in Asia is unaware of the air, sea, and submarine power that the Soviets have concentrated in Da Nang and above all in Cam Ranh. In fact, the latter—also in Viet Nam—is their most powerful base, and the one most generously equipped with nuclear weapons, outside the Warsaw Pact zone. Yet the Soviet Ambassador to Australia, speaking in Canberra in March 1987, categorically denied that Cam Ranh was a naval base—or at least that there was anything military about it. He swore that his country was interested only in diplomacy, trade, and sporting and cultural exchanges. The Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, Eduard Shevardnadze, visiting the region shortly afterwards, appealed to its peoples to "denuclearise" the Pacific zone. There was no suggestion that the process might also involve his own country. Far from bragging, the Minister's speech avoided any mention of the nuclear arsenal deployed by his country all over the place, from Stockholm to the Seychelles, notably aboard its submarines.

For the moment, the American air and naval presence in the South Pacific region offsets this rise in the Soviet forces. However, that may not always be the case. This was thrown into clear relief by the experts and politicians who met recently in Singapore for a conference on the strategic, economic, and political implications of the military bases of South-east Asia. It was possible to compare the viewpoints of the main countries that feel concerned about increases in Soviet-Vietnamese strategic potential: the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Thailand, Australia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Three other powers—farther removed from but still directly involved in the South Pacific theatre—also participated: Japan, the USA, and France. In particular, Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, speaking with an authority that is now universally acknowledged, was able to show how in this new arena we can identify item by item the tried-and-tested stratagems of Soviet policy towards "the Third World".

For that is what is involved here. Granted, several of the region's economies do not or no longer belong to the Third World. Even the least developed of them have got beyond the appalling poverty of certain African states, say, or of Viet Nam. The themes on which the USSR plays in the region are thus primarily political, except in the very small islands. Vanuatu is the best known example here, with Moscow offering the islanders fishing contracts that finish up as leases for naval bases. The Philippines, however, obviously derive greater economic benefits from their cooperation with the United States, including the spin-offs from the American bases present on their territory, than they could ever expect from the Soviets. Their anguish stems from another cause: a legitimate nationalism that causes many Filipinos to feel that their independence will not be complete until those bases are closed.

Playing on that feeling of resentment, the Soviets went so far, not very long ago, as to pay shameless court to President



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Marcos. (Indeed, the Soviet government was the only one to issue an official communiqué deploring the dictator's downfall in 1986!) Their anti-Americanism has led the Filipinos to hold the United States responsible for ills that are endemic in their own society: the *coup* mentality, poverty, guerrilla warfare, and politicisation of the army. The illusion that all these ills would disappear as if by magic if the bases were closed is reminiscent of certain features of Latin America—notably a xenophobia that tends to amount to a political programme on its own, and the fragility that characterises a democracy squeezed between Communist guerrillas and a *coup*-happy military.

Does this sterile, suicidal combination possibly arise out of a common Spanish past? Be that as it may, the Soviets have not been slow to fan the flames. Mikhail Gorbachov personally granted *Merdeka*, the Indonesian weekly, a wide-ranging interview in July 1987. In it he showed himself warmly sympathetic to Filipino desires to "resist imperialism" —while giving profuse and barely concealed encouragement to the Communist guerrillas who are trying to overthrow the government of Mrs Cory Aquino. One recognises the eternally unequal struggle between democracies and totalitarian régimes. Is *Pravda* likely to offer Corazon Aquino the hospitality of its columns to incite the Tatars to revolt, or encourage the people of Moscow to go looting the tempting specialist *nomenklatura* shops?

My impression is that it is mainly Filipino intellectuals who are hostile to the American bases. Ordinary people—more than half of them, according to the polls—want to see them retained (with 19% against and 26% "don't knows"). However, the Americans will not be able to keep them indefinitely. They come under a 25-year agreement that expires in 1991 and is renewable for only a year at a time.

As regards the security of the South Pacific, they are both indispensable and excessively concentrated. They are indispensable because once they go they will leave a strategic vacuum in that part of the world, with only the Soviet fleet to fill it. Cam Ranh will have lost its chief counterweight. Yet at the same time they are too concentrated. There is no logic in a system for the protection of the whole South Pacific (as far as New Zealand) being located in the Philippines alone. Its bases need to be redistributed in order to cover the whole of the area—including, above all, Australia.

However, Australia—together with New Zealand—happens to have placed itself at the head of an anti-nuclear crusade that is inevitably also anti-American and anti-French. The fact is that, for the militants of the Pacific as for the "partisans of peace" in Europe, only Western atomic weapons exist. How should they believe otherwise? Do they not have it on the authority of such Soviet sources as Valery Semokov (the Embassy attaché in Canberra) and Admiral Smirov (second-in-command of the Pacific fleet)? And did not those officers—again within the context of the Soviet Union's gracious, if wordy, collaboration with the free world's press—write in the *Melbourne Age* in February 1987 that the Cam Ranh base had "nothing military" about it but was only a supply-point and rest-station for crews? A sort of cafeteria-on-the-sea, presumably.

The attitude of Australia in the face of this Soviet invasion of the South Pacific is an excellent illustration of the power of certain busy minorities. Taking Australian opinion as a whole, nearly three-quarters of the population support the American alliance and the ANZUS treaty in which it is embodied. The present Australian government, like all its predecessors, also favours the alliance. However, watching television or listening to the speeches of those on the left wing of the Labour Party or the more eloquent trade-union leaders, the sermons of the enlightened clergy, or the lessons of the country's highly progressive teaching body from primary school right up to university level, I get the impression that the vast majority of Australians are heartily opposed to the United States and want to see US naval forces withdrawn. These anti-nuclear, anti-American, and anti-French currents have merged with the "Peace Movement", whose affinities, there as elsewhere, are common knowledge. The resultant flood forced the signature of the Raratonga Treaty, advocating the denuclearisation of the South Pacific zone.

However, the anti-nuclear lobbyists, as unilateralist as their European counterparts, have their sights only on the United States and France. It is only the West's weapons that they see as dangerous and immoral. The movement shows no concern about—indeed never mentions and seems to be unaware of—the very existence of an immense Soviet nuclear deployment all the way from north of Japan to south of Indonesia. "Liberation theologians"—active in that part of the world too—often make no secret of their admiration for the Hanoi government. In April 1987, a number of spokesmen of the pacifist, anti-nuclear, anti-colonialist movement held a conference in Misratah. I spent a long time searching for the place on a detailed map of the South Pacific. None of my magnifying-glasses was powerful enough to locate it. I now know why: I should have been looking in Libya.

Political developments both in the Philippines and in Australia suggest that we are seeing a progressive enfeeblement of, or at any rate a crisis in, the American system of security in the South Pacific. What makes this all the more probable is the fact that New Zealand, by refusing American units access to its ports, has in practice abrogated the ANZUS treaty as far as it is concerned.

By contrast, the economic and strategic links between the Soviet Union and Viet Nam seem closer than ever—irreversible, in fact. Vietnamese socialism has brilliantly equalled and even outdone its elder brothers in terms of economic failure. It therefore badly needs help from Moscow—to the tune, probably, of some thirteen billion dollars for the current five-year period. Soviet military installations in the country make the Soviet presence indispensable to the very survival of the Hanoi government. In an editorial entitled "The great strength of Soviet-Vietnamese friendship and cooperation", an official government spokesman defined that cooperation as "a matter of life or death for the Vietnamese Revolution as well as for the position of Socialism in Indochina".

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Note that what is at stake is Indochina as a whole, not just Viet Nam. Soviet aid to the Vietnamese army soared when that army invaded Cambodia in 1979—an operation that was clearly decided on by common accord. Moreover, a network of Soviet bases, notably bomber bases, covers Viet Nam, Cambodia, and Laos. But the really important ones are the two bases of Da Nang and Cam Ranh, which contain one of the world's densest concentrations of naval, air, and submarine missile-launching forces.

From the Chinese standpoint, the Sovietisation of the Pacific is an even greater problem than it is for the West or for Japan. Since the conquest of Viet Nam and the invasion of Afghanistan, China has been virtually surrounded by the Soviet Army along the whole of its land frontier. Now it has the Soviet Navy patrolling its coastline. Furthermore, an American withdrawal from the Pacific theatre would force Japan to undertake a radical reappraisal of its own security.

Meanwhile, with his bases proliferating throughout the world, Mikhail Gorbachov can calmly pursue his peace offensive in Europe and North America.

# The Survivor of the Forbidden City

## *Pu Yi, in Fact & Film—By* LUCIEN BODARD

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"AND THE MORAL of this story, if it has one, is that the destinies of men of straw yield neither esteem nor happiness. . . ."

So wrote a Paris newspaper in October 1945, announcing the overthrow of Pu Yi, the last Emperor of China, who on 1 March 1934 became "ruler of Manchukuo", the puppet state that the Japanese had set up in Manchuria two years earlier, after wresting the country from China.

I do not know about *estime* or *bonheur*, but they certainly yield fascination. Witness a recent spate of books;[1] witness *The Last Emperor*, the film that Bernardo Bertolucci has just devoted to the lush yet wretched existence of Pu Yi; and witness, finally, my own obsessions.

When I was living in Peking in 1956 I wanted desperately to meet the former Emperor, then prisoner number 981 in a Manchurian jail. Permission was granted, and the interview that followed has left me with the memory of a painful nightmare: the Emperor, his brain well and truly washed, proceeded to wallow in humiliation, just as his "re-educators" (who were looking on) wished him to do. Bertolucci speaks of "redemption". To me the word seems over-bold.

I must, however, give the Italian director credit for the sheer splendour of his film and above all for his magical representation of the Imperial City. He succeeds in portraying all its pomp and ritual. He gives us the death of the terrible regent, Tz'e Hsi (Cixi), the old woman who had ruled the Middle Empire through a 50-year reign of blood and sensuality. He does not, however, choose to portray her last crime, when on 15 November 1908, before finally passing away, she gave herself the pleasure of having Emperor Kuang Su put to death in her presence. Kuang Su was a nephew who had once tried to have her assassinated; since then she had kept him constantly beside her—in chains. Afterwards she placed a child of three on the Dragon Throne, an undistinguished great-nephew by the name of Pu Yi.

It was this infant who inspired Bertolucci, who then proceeded to give free rein to his natural talent for the *merveilleux*. We see hundreds upon hundreds of dignitaries on their knees in paved courtyards framed by pagoda pavilions, we see mandarins making the great genuflexion nine times over before the laughing babe who is the Son of Heaven—all this by way of a prelude to the sublime coronation of a noisy brat who squeals all through the sacred rite.

Yet it seems to me that Bertolucci does not really capture the person Pu Yi was to become through the vicissitudes of his extraordinary existence. He makes him a vacuous prey to neurosis, to the illness that is the lack of love. No doubt he was, but I doubt whether that explains everything.

I heard Pu Yi's complaint from his own lips. The imperial infant had been separated from his mother, who was deemed unworthy of him. Later they took away his nurse, probably the only woman he ever loved. Pu Yi's emotional deprivation was further aggravated when the new Chinese Republic—which came into being in 1911—forced him to abdicate but left him in possession of the Forbidden City, granting him a comfortable civil list. There, cut off from the society of men,

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[1] *Pu Yi: The Last Emperor*. By EDWARD BEHR. Macdonald, £12.95. Translated into French by BEATRICE VIERNE as *Pu Yi, le dernier empereur* (Laffont). This is a well-documented biography that cleverly avoids all the pitfalls of the Pu Yi affair, the elements of which it sets out rigorously.

*Puppet Emperor: Life of Pu Yi, Last Emperor of China*. By BRIAN POWER. Peter Owen, £13.50. Translated into French by SUZANNE CHARPIER as *Le dernier Fils du Ciel, 1906-1967* (Balland). This biographical indictment presents Pu Yi as mentally retarded, depraved, and cunning.

*Ombres jaunes*. By BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI. Cahiers du Cinéma. A diary of the Italian director's filming of *The Last Emperor*.

Pu Yi, *J'étais empereur de Chine* (Flammarion, 1975), Pu Yi's own autobiography.

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the Son of Heaven experienced his first prison, as Bertolucci rightly underlines . . . the cruel beauty of those lacquered doors continually closing on the young man . . . the sheer loneliness of his life . . . and the way in which Pu Yi did after all discover the outside world under the guidance of an English tutor.

Recalling this period of his life for my benefit, Pu Yi had only one comment to make. It was political, of course. The indulgence shown him by the Republic, he was to tell me, proved that "bourgeois revolutions" are bad because they do not "go all the way"!

This situation continued until 1924, when a war lord drove him out, forcing him to flee to Tientsin (now called Tianjin) in the foreign concessions. There he was reduced to the status of a common man, a sad playboy eaten up with anger and regrets. It was there that he sought to recover wealth and power by selling himself to the Japanese, who installed him as Emperor of Manchukuo. Pu Yi—traitor and prisoner—took his place on a servile throne, believing that from there he would succeed, as the last Emperor of the Manchu dynasty, in conquering the whole of China as his ancestors had done in the 17th century. The Japanese, of course, had other plans. For them Pu Yi was merely a decoy before the big invasion, launched in 1937.

Pu Yi described his "collaboration" to me as "a secret, daily, never-ending struggle", adding that it had also been one long waste of time, since all it had amounted to was two imperialist minds—his and the Japanese—locked in combat! In fact, Pu Yi and his people were methodically crushed, and the Emperor acquiesced because he was "threatened with death" (as he told the International War Crimes Tribunal in Tokyo in 1946). At the time, foreign correspondents found him "violent, emotional, given to irony, formidably eloquent". Not long afterwards, in the summer of 1950, his Russian captors handed him over to Mao Tse-tung. And the extraordinary thing was that Mao, rather than having him executed, followed Chou En-Lai's advice and set out to make a "new man" of him. This "triumph of Red virtue", coming after the morbid splendours of the Forbidden City and the sinister mockeries of Manchukuo, fills the whole of Bertolucci's film.

Oh dialectics! you serpents of Laocoon whose coils wrapped themselves round Pu Yi's head—how I hated you when I set eyes on that crushed convert! Nothing was left of the vehement witness of the Tokyo trial. This was in 1956, as I said, the time of Mao's short-lived "Hundred Flowers". Throughout China criminals were no longer shot but educated (or rather "re-educated") in the name of the People, by means of prolonged and rigorous exorcisms. War lords, capitalists, tools of reaction—all inevitably "came good", recovered some pristine health, given sufficient time. Pu Yi's "cure" took him nine years.

They showed him to me at Fushun. It is a typical coal-mining town, full of slag-heaps and tracts of waste ground —a spoiled industrial landscape. The house was completely sealed off with barbed-wire and sentries. The ex-Emperor appeared in democratic garb: blue work-clothes and black boots. He was quaking with fear. Beneath the stern gaze of his "re-educators", I had to ask my questions and he had to recite for my benefit the catalogue of his misdeeds. Above all he had to show me the sincerity of his repentance and the quality of his remorse. It was important that he should perform well, for his guards were also his judges. Pale-faced and sweating, he concluded the grim, repulsive charade by telling me about his "wonderful" future. For he would be equally happy, whether the masses called for his death or whether they pardoned him. In any case, a death sentence or generous clemency "were simply the two sides of the same justice that would free me from my past. . . ."

As we know, in 1959 the People pardoned him. Pu Yi became first a gardener, then an assistant librarian in Peking, where he was required to write his memoirs for the edification of the masses (and very boring they were too). He had the good fortune to disappear at the beginning of the "Cultural Revolution", which would certainly not have spared his life.

What did he really think, that master survivor who became a fully-fledged member of post-Revolution Pekinese society? Had he redeemed himself, as Bertolucci fantasises? Or had he secretly triumphed (for he too, in his way, had parried and thrust very cleverly through all his tribulations)? Whatever the truth of the matter, the fact remains that he was again afraid—afraid of the new Red Guards, afraid of the tortures which had already been inflicted on his old "re-educator". This time, the only thing left for him was to die. Which he did, taking his enigma with him.

## The Snowy Owl

The trail is there still, snaking past screes
on the ridge where he hunted, once, at dawn,
the rifle, new, held in the crook of his arm.
And the wings, their thrum sudden through the trees.

All there still, the smell of wet spruce, that sound
settling high in the branches of a beech,
the white radiance like humped snow in a patch
of sun, and the rifle leaping in his hand.

When he holds the white bird, its body limp, still warm,
a williwaw drifts through that far-off day,
a cold breath insisting that he will pay,
for what he didn't mean, in days to come.

*Eric Trethewey*

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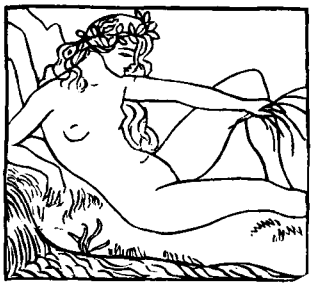
# Sons & Mothers

## *D. H. Lawrence & "Mr Noon"—By* DAVID HOLBROOK



*MR NOON*[1] raises important questions of the relationship between D. H. Lawrence's life and his art. The Editor of the volume, Lindeth Vasey, tells us that "it is an obvious trap . . . to make over-simple correspondences between Lawrence's art and his life". But perhaps no other work is so closely fictionalised autobiography, and the important biographical episodes are hidden in the notes: our attention is drawn to the history of the actual writing of the novel, but the quite staggering revelations in it, confirmed by evidence from biographical sources, are tucked away at the back. How commonly known is it, for example, that Frieda was unfaithful to her new husband on their honeymoon? And that both she and her sister had love affairs with the German sex revolutionary, Otto Gross, whose letters she kept all her life?

*Mr Noon* was never published in any final form approved by Lawrence, and so our criticism of it can never be just. But we must be concerned with its final "upshot"—because when we study this, it must alter our whole approach to the later novels. The word "upshot" I take from F. R. Leavis, and I use it rather than the word "message" to indicate that, however we interpret them, the novels belong to a concern to teach us how to be men and women—that there are implications in the novels, in the way the drama is enacted, as well as in the explicit sermonising, about the nature of relationships between the sexes. We recognise in Lawrence at best, as in, say, "Odour of Chrysanthemum" or "The Daughters of the Vicar", an imaginative penetration to the truth of human make-up. We revere Lawrence for his "terrifying honesty" in this respect, and see his art as a form of thinking about subjective truth. But what happens if we detect that he registers what he takes to be truth, but seems to have become involved in falsification? We must then try to test his "upshot" against what we ourselves know of human nature.

*Mr Noon* helps us to do this, not least because it is so close to actual persons and events. What it reveals is that Lawrence was seriously compromised by the circumstances of his own marriage, and by the influence on Frieda of German sexual revolutionism and Munich-Schwäbing radicalism.[2] As we shall see, there were two developments pulling in different directions. On the one hand Frieda's "free" approach to sexuality helped Lawrence over his problems of bringing together in woman the ideal and the libidinal (so clear, for instance, in the abandoned prologue to *Women in Love*); and undoubtedly he loved her. On the other hand, there was a deep resentment in him, and an unconscious fear of woman, which impelled him to seek more and more to demand "submission", with a parallel denial of woman's pursuit of sexual satisfaction. *Mr Noon* throws a great deal of light on this confusion.

Lawrence began *Mr Noon* in May 1920, but despite several attempts he never finished it. Part I was published in *A Modern Lover* in 1934 (this was later collected in *Phoenix II* in 1969). Part II was published for the first time in 1984. The historical sequence is discussed at length in the Introductions. The publication of *Kangaroo* in 1923 may have affected Lawrence's feelings about the unpublished work: it precluded the use again of the war material. In *Aaron's Rod*, finished in 1921, Lawrence asserted a view of the relationship between man and woman which indicates a new direction to his thought. Marriage to him is now unsatisfactory, because women are too concerned with pleasing themselves sexually —the way forward is proper submission to the man (a view which Leavis surprisingly endorsed in his discussion of "The Captain's Doll"). Lindeth Vasey sees Part II of *Mr Noon* as an "elegiac backward glance to Lawrence's old belief in the primacy of the loving relationship between man and woman". But is it? A closer examination seems to reveal that Lawrence records in it an unsolved perplexity, of not being able to resolve two views of man-woman relationships.

The first view, which is that of Lawrence the great English novelist, holds that the fundamental aim is good relationship, mutuality, at all levels including the sexual, but also including the "spiritual" (as when he talks of "stars"). The second view endorses the pursuit, in all honesty, of "naked desire" ("I

[1] D. H. Lawrence, *Mr Noon*, edited by Lindeth Vasey, Cambridge Edition of the novels of D. H. Lawrence (Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[2] For a detailed account, see Martin Green, *The Von Richthofen Sisters: The Triumphant and the Tragic Modes of Love: Else and Frieda Von Richthofen, Otto Gross, Max Weber, and D. H. Lawrence, in the years 1870-1970* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974).



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want that woman . . . I want that pound of peaches . . . "), even if this means "excursions", adulteries, infidelities, and even if it means sexual perversions—indeed, these may be modes of expansion beyond the normal which enhance the rejection of socially-endorsed restrictions on love. Despite Lawrence's doubts about the ethos of the Schwäbing world of political Bohemianism, Frieda's embodiment of it compromised him, because he had to live with it. *Mr Noon* reveals a consequent deep confusion in Lawrence over these matters, a confusion which is, I believe, the source of many false solutions in his work, in the later *The Plumed Serpent*, and elsewhere.

Lawrence, at his best, sought integration, and a recognition "that there exist processes beyond our control and comprehension . . . and that there is a willingness to be for ever in ferment, on the move, restless, searching, never still, never 'arrived'. . . ." Yet, as we contemplate the later works, we must surely have misgivings about his attitudes to sex and women—far more than F. R. Leavis allowed himself to have, even over *The Plumed Serpent*, and especially over "The Fox", "The Woman who Rode Away" and *The Virgin and the Gipsy*. The established view of Lawrence still fails to admit certain deeply questionable aspects of his work. It has been noted that after Birkin's reference to "balance" and "stars" he progresses to a desire for a certain kind of relationship with a man. Some also note that Lawrence moves towards a need for domination over woman, which, later, out of a profound fear of her, led to an urgent need to demand her submission: and, at worst, to fantasise putting her to death. But there has been so far a failure in criticism generally to recognise that much in Lawrence's later work is seriously questionable. For instance, would any of the learned conferences now being arranged ever have a seminar on his enthusiasm for hostile sodomy? Or on his idolisation of the man who "dares" to do this—and who dares to murder?

I HAVE SPOKEN of "a certain kind of relationship with a man", and my reason for putting it like that is not timidity. Lawrence had a distaste for homosexual physical relationships, as we know. Yet over Gerald and Birkin he said:

> "Gerald and he had a curious love for each other. It was a love that was ultimately death, a love which was complemented by the hatred for woman. . . . It tore woman from woman, and woman from man. The two halves divided and separated, each drawing away to itself. And the great chasm that came between the two sundered halves was death, universal death."

This is from the unpublished "Prologue" to *Women in Love* which is taken by some to indicate Lawrence's impulse towards homosexuality, or his unadmitted homosexuality. But I believe the passage indicates a problem which lies much deeper—that of gender.

ONE COMMON MALE PROBLEM[3] is the difficulty some people have of bringing the woman together as both ideal and libidinal: the Madonna and the Prostitute. In the "Prologue", Lawrence writes about Birkin and his incapacity to love:

> "He would not sacrifice the sensual to the spiritual half of himself, and he could not sacrifice the spiritual to the sensual half. . . . To be spiritual, he must have a Hermione, completely without desire: to be sensual, he must have a slightly bestial woman, the very scent of whose skin soon disgusted him, whose manners nauseated him beyond bearing. . . ."

The origins of this kind of problem, a psychoanalyst could argue, may lie in the idealisation of the mother: and, as we see in *Sons and Lovers*, all cultural and spiritual qualities "belong to" the mother, so that when Miriam assumes them, as a sexual object, she comes into serious trouble. Clara, who is a combination of several of Lawrence's women, does not present this problem, but her appeal fades in the other way. When Lawrence was involved with a number of women at that time, he kept them strictly separate, so that some were for civilised contacts, while some were simply for sensual encounters: one woman he called "Morphia", because she gave him sex and sexual relief only. He seems to have been seriously split in himself and his relational capacities.

There is another problem, which appears from time to time in Lawrence's work: the presence within his psyche of a mother-imago which seems to be condemned to a meaningless existence in the world of death, unless in some way he can redeem her. In *Kangaroo*, this hostile and malignant ghost of the dead mother appears to Somers (who "is" Lawrence) in a dream. There, Lawrence registers his astonishment that such a malevolent ghost could threaten his sexual life. This is in the chapter called "COO-EE", p. 103 in the Heinemann edition:

> ". . . his dreams of a woman, a woman he loved, something like Harriet, something like his mother, and yet unlike either, a woman sullen and obstinate, against him, repudiating him . . . he had betrayed her love, and she must go down desolate into an everlasting hell, denied, and denying him absolutely in return, a sullen, awful soul. . . ."

If we read carefully, we may find this ghost reappearing all through Lawrence's work, and she appears often as Lawrence (in the form of the protagonist) is about to give himself to another woman.

Sexual giving, then, brought the fear of "repudiation" from the internalised mother-imago—that is, sexual giving to a woman other than the mother. All Lawrence's work, I believe, can be seen as belonging to an attempt to overcome this problem, to put at rest the hostile ghost of the phantom woman of the unconscious. She must in some way be resurrected, and one of the methods by which this might be achieved is by a magical operation of giving her sexual fulfilment, by using godlike powers of some kind. The ithyphallic powers of the male self as a "column of blood" is, at the unconscious level, the way to lay this inner ghost.

Lawrence's predicament is explained by placing this inter-

[3] See Robert J. Stoller, *Sex and Gender* (New York; Science House, 1968; Aronson, 1975).

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pretation alongside what he writes in the Prologue. If he cannot bring together male and female in himself, if he cannot bring together spiritual and libidinal in himself, he is doomed: there is "nothing". Yet as soon as he penetrates the vagina and reaches towards the womb, he encounters the *mater* in the *matrix*. Two solutions to this problem offered a lure. In the woman's anus there is no such danger, nor was the danger presented by intense love relationships with a man.

In a passage about Lawrence and mutual orgasm, Compton Mackenzie relates how Lawrence confessed to him that he was much distressed by his failure ever to experience mutual orgasm with a woman. At the same time he spoke of how the most satisfying sexual experiences he had ever had were with a youth of sixteen when he was young. This would seem to lie behind the passages about George's physique in *The White Peacock*, and other references to rapturous bodily contact between men, extolling it above contacts with woman. Lawrence is at his most hostile when he writes of the woman using her "beak-like" clitoris in a male way: Parkin relates how women are not "soft" down there, but have this male hardness. To fulfil herself woman must not exercise this search for "satisfaction", but lapse completely under the domination of a man who "dares" to sodomise her or who has shown—like Cipriano, Jack, and Henry (the youth who is the fox in "The Fox")—that he is capable of murder. She must go into a state of utter submission, and flow away into what seems like some kind of fit. In "The Woman Who Rode Away" there is a fantasy of this ultimate sexual dying, as when she waits under a massive phallus of ice, for her heart to be torn out.

The symbolism of these "demented fantasies" (as Kate Millett calls them) is of the death and resurrection of the dead mother-imago, and it involves an implicit denial of the being of any real woman in a mutual relationship in love. Lawrence's sexual theories thus culminate in a false solution which fails to recognise difference in mutuality at all, but settles for ultimate domination over the woman, and he becomes interested in power rather than love. *Mr Noon* reveals how he came to take this path.

THE BOOK makes Lawrence's problem with women starkly clear. Despite his original sense of the profound meaning which love can give to life, Lawrence became involved, when he took on Frieda Weekley, in a Schwäbing-Munich ethos which practised a "free" eroticism directed in a political sense against "society". *Mr Noon* reveals the degree to which Lawrence was compromised by the devotion of Frieda to Otto Gross, who appears here as "Eberhard".

Gross (1877-1919) was a one-time disciple of Freud who became a proponent of sexual libertarianism and drugs, held orgies in barns, and seems to have had two mistresses at once for most of the time. He had affairs with both Frieda and her sister, to whom he gave a baby.[4] He was often surrounded by women whom he had made pregnant, and—according to Johanna in *Mr Noon*—he talked all the time, even when making love (which we can well believe of any sexual revolutionary). Some of his mistresses came to protest about his treatment of them, and when one told him she would commit suicide, he offered her some poison—which she took, and died. This happened with at least two of his women. Gross had a cruel and authoritarian father, and his "free" behaviour was clearly psychopathological, full of hate and an unconscious will to murder: he was at one time imprisoned while the psychiatric world struggled over his fate. Yet Frieda, significantly, kept his letters and maintained a relationship with him by correspondence.

Perhaps the most sinister aspect of the movement to which Gross belonged was the presence in the background of the egoistical nihilist, Max Stirner, who promoted the attitude to existence of: "The other—my food!" and "I practise a terrorism of the self". Stirner's work was called *The Unique One and His Property*, and his ultimate attitude to existence was vulpine. A great deal in all this would have been repugnant to Lawrence: but he was influenced by it, despite himself, as *Mr Noon* reveals.

At the beginning of the book, the protagonist Gilbert is released from his English moral ideas by a view of the Alps: his English standards suddenly seem to him too "tight". Soon, he meets Johanna, who "is" Frieda, and within a few minutes she is asking him up to her room. So the attitudes to sexual relationships of the English Midlands, one might say, come into contact with those of the Greenwich Village of Munich. In Johanna-Frieda is embodied the principles of Grossian revolutionism: *pleasure is the only source of value*. Only by re-entering into the Paradise Lost of "polymorphous perversity" can man renew himself. The primitive races made all the great discoveries, and our civilisation is corrupt at the roots.

This is all pure Gross, enlivened by the von Richthofen sisters. (It was, actually, Frieda Weekley who, by her "sunniness", removed the shadow of Freud from Gross's path, he said, and helped him towards his policy of leading his patients towards sexual immoralism.) But *Mr Noon* shows that there remained in Lawrence a deep conflict over this influence in his life. Though he was inclined by all the traditions of his past to reject it, it obviously appealed to his unconscious inclinations—not least in seeming to offer a freedom from all the old dread of dead parental sexuality and the ghost of the internalised blighting mother.[5]

The most revealingly significant episode in *Mr Noon* comes at the end of the novel, when the protagonist Gilbert and his woman Johanna are walking in the Alps; the episode is clearly autobiographical and based on Lawrence's honeymoon (so beautifully recorded in the poems *Look! We Have Come Through!*). Suddenly, after a brief encounter with some friends, Johanna announces, "I want to tell you. Stanley had me the night before last."

The response is confused. At one level, a deep sense of

[4] See Martin Green, *The Von Richthofen Sisters*, pp. 49, 53, 366. Gross's wife Friedel, Else von Richthofen, and another young woman were all pregnant by Gross at the time.

[5] See Marie von Naevestad, *The Colours of Rage and Love* (Universitetsforlaget, 1979) for a record of a patient's efforts to redeem the menacing internalised mother, to achieve her sexual freedom. See also Robert J. Stoller, *Perversion, The Erotic Form of Hatred* (1976).

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shock sets in. Everything goes "vague" around them: "Night, loneliness, danger, all merged." But significantly there is no great response realised in Gilbert, and the matter is dealt with in limpid, almost schoolgirlish tones.

> ". . . it was such a surprise to him; that he did not know what to feel, or if he felt anything at all. It had not any meaning for him. . . ."

Absurdly (and it is surely sheer sentimentality and falsity?) Gilbert *throws his arms round her*!

> "'Never mind, my love', he said. 'Never mind. Never mind. We do things we don't know we're doing.'"

"He rose above the new thrust on wings of death": this lame phrase is as much as Lawrence can do here, by way of registering the shock—in its menace to loyalty and integrity: to *meaning*. Clearly Lawrence is faking. It is almost impossible to believe that the author of *Look! We Have Come Through!* could write of himself or of a sympathetic character, in such a moment, with so little passion or feeling. But Lawrence, under the influence of Grossian revolutionism, makes Gilbert think that ". . . he believed people must do what they want to do".[6]

So, one might say, Gilbert-Lawrence is hoist by his own petard—his own "model" of man which, when examined, is one which believes that our deepest reality is the pursuit of "naked desire", and so, fundamentally, egoistical nihilism. If "naked desire" is the guide, from the gods beyond the threshold, *why not*? This question suddenly emerges in Lawrence's reflection over another earlier sudden sexual adventure by "Johanna". "Why not?" And, amazingly, we realise that Lawrence not only has no answer, but endorses here that "Why not?" amoralism. If the poets are liars and (as Connie Chatterley puts it) "all one wanted" was this "rather awful sensuality", then what can be the objection?

If it is true that what people "want" is "that pound of peaches . . . that woman", as Lawrence put it in a letter, then there can be nothing to stand in the way. And then any rejection of this immoralism is seen by Gilbert-Lawrence as mere English puritanism. All Lawrence can say is that Gilbert's soul has a nasty tendency to go "all acid and hard" over the infidelity—as if this were just some antediluvian English response to the new Alpine perspectives of European sex.

And as for Johanna, she just believes in love all round:

> "He knew that Johanna believed in much love, à la Magdalen. 'For she hath loved much.' And he himself, Gilbert, he could stand aside for a moment."

However, she declares:

> ". . . It wasn't much, anyhow. It meant nothing to me. I believe he was impotent."

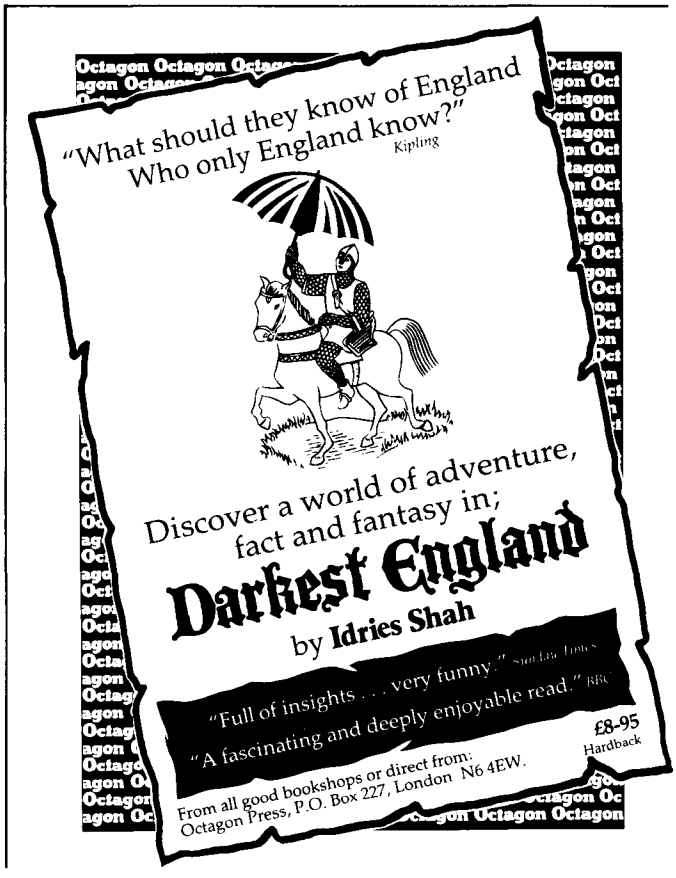
But wouldn't she have known?

[6] For the biographical events behind this infidelity, see D. H. Lawrence, *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 489; David Garnett, *The Golden Echo* (1953), p. 297; and Paul Delaney, *D. H. Lawrence's Nightmare* (1980), p. 395.

THE WHOLE PROBLEM with *Mr Noon* is that Lawrence cannot help showing in it that to Johanna-Frieda "open" sex with anyone who turned up, who seemed to "want" it, had a positive moral purpose; yet on the scale of his earlier "moral" approach (his *English* approach, we might say), such behaviour threatened to make sex meaningless.

Lawrence loved Frieda, I feel sure, because love, as he understood it, seemed to offer a complete escape from the turmoil which his psychic ghosts always brought to him: surely, in that uninhibited response, there was the solution—not least when she encouraged a Grossian preoccupation with "polymorphous perversity". We have seen that in the Prologue Lawrence shows that for him perhaps one escape from inhibition was a compensatory impulse to "be sensual", to go for a woman "the very scent of whose skin soon disgusted him". Frieda's immoralistic sensuality had that kind of appeal: and in the novels about sexual experience it is indicative how often he speaks of the joys of pursuing "the secret places of shame", not out of tolerance—a belief that there should be no shame—but *because* they are shameful.

The concomitant of this attraction to the fanatical immoralism of Frieda was the loss of all that Lawrence writes about, around the question of the mutual uniqueness lovers perceive in one another, as in the lovely poem "Roses on the Beakfast Table". The most disturbing thing about *Mr Noon* is the absence of the recognition of this aspect of sexual reality: of the questions which might have been expected to arise, such as "Then what happens to fidelity?", "What then happens to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the equilibrium of the stars?", and "If sex here is meaningless, then what happens to the whole Lawrentian enterprise of finding meaning and being through the sexual dimension?" The answer is that it became diverted into the false solutions of power, with an undercurrent of revenge.

The falsity can be seen in *Mr Noon*, in the way Gilbert bounces up. It is parallel to the scene in which Will Brangwen has an "excursion" with a girl whom he picks up, and finds in the attempted infidelity a new excitement, while Anna loves him more because of it. For the truth is that the disturbances which dogged Lawrence in his marriage, and his false solutions to them, are to be found in those books which seek to answer the question "What is marriage?"—*The Rainbow*[7] and *Women in Love*. In those, too, there emerges the enthusiasm for the sodomitic solution. Gilbert finds a new thrill in sodomy. The reference (p. 290) is not quite explicit, but when one knows the parallel episodes in *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, it is not difficult to decipher:

> "Something seemed to come loose in Gilbert's soul, quite suddenly. Quite suddenly, in the night one night he touched Johanna as she lay asleep with her back to him, touching him, and something broke alive in his soul that had been dead before. A sudden shock of new experience. Such sweetness, the intolerable sensual sweetness, the silken, fruitlike sweetness of her loins that touched him, as she lay with her back to him—his soul broke like a dry rock that breaks and gushes into life. Ach richness —unspeakable and untellable richness. Ach bliss—deep, sensual, silken bliss! It was as if the old sky cracked, curled and peeled away, leaving a great new sky, a great new pellucid empyrean that had never been breathed before."

One could, I suppose, see this simply as the prose parallel to the poems which Lawrence wrote about suddenly "finding" his wife as another person, for instance, "New Heaven and Earth" (*Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*, Vol. 1, 1964, pp. 256 ff):

> *It was the flank of his wife*
> *I touched with my hand, I clutched with my hand. . . .*
> *I was carried by the current in death*
> *Over to the new world, and was climbing out on the*
> *shore. . . .*

These poems are marvellous records of the proper discovery of the "otherness" of the loved one. After reading *Mr Noon*, however, one sees in them a new and more sinister meaning. For the hints of some revolutionary sensual development are clear: Gilbert could never have achieved this new life with the girl he flirted with at home in England—Emmie. What was needed for his resurrection was something *not nice*:

> "If he had married some *really* nice woman . . . then he would never have broken out of the dry integument that enclosed him . . . the act of birth, dear reader, really is not and cannot be a really nice business. It is a bloody and horrid and gruesome affair. And that is what we must face. . . ."

The hints are subdued as to what kind of a "fight" Lawrence is writing about: the Lady Chatterley novels fill it in: the clue to the new world is that Johanna has her *back* to him. As he puts it in "New Heaven and Earth":

> *I am here*
> *risen and setting my foot in another world risen,*
> *accomplishing a resurrection . . . living where life was never yet dreamed of. . . .*
> *I am the discoverer!*
> *I have found the other world!*

The other world is not the woman's separate being—but her anus.[8] The poems at the end of *Look! We Have Come Through!* are most revealing in this respect, and give many clues to the political connotations of Lawrence's obsession with what now becomes clear as that kind of knowledge of women, that new world of polymorphous perversity, in which "anything goes".

WHAT IS noticeable both in "New Heaven and Earth" and *Mr Noon* is the elated sense of relief expressed over this experience: "Behold a new Gilbert." It is an escape from "prison"; and so it becomes a political programme:

> "It needs a fight with the matrix of the old era. . . ."

The word *matrix* is important: the womb, which one is in contact with through the vagina, is seen both as that which belongs to the mother and that which must be broken or burst away from. It is also the old social and political habits—"womb ideas"—which we must overthrow. It is not quite clear from *Mr Noon* exactly how Lawrence thought the kind of sensuality Gilbert finds may be adopted by us to make the world anew, but, after the sodomy:

> "Behold a new Gilbert. Once the old skies have shrivelled, useless to try and retain their ancient, withered significance. Useless to try and have the old values, they have gone."

Sodomy can do more than provide a new life for a man: it can lead us all into a new world:

> "So it is with man, gentle reader. There are worlds within worlds within worlds of unknown life and joy inside him. But every time, it needs a sort of cataclysm to get out of the old world into the new. It needs a very painful shedding of an old skin. It needs a fight with the matrix of the old era. . . ."

The shadow of the internalised inhibiting mother lurks within woman's body—lurks in the vagina. It is against that that we must struggle: and this becomes politicised: "a bitter struggle to the death with the old, warm, well-known mother of our days."

It is really astonishing how Lawrence gives himself away:

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[7] The original name for *The Rainbow* was *The Wedding Ring*.

[8] See, in ENCOUNTER, February 1962, John Sparrow, "Regina v. Penguin Books Ltd: An Undisclosed Element in the Case".

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that "warm", for instance, reveals how his excitement over sodomy has to do with fear of the cradling mother, who threatens "horrible merging":

> "Fight the old, enclosing mother of our days—fight her to the death—and defeat her—and then we shall burst out into a new heaven and a new earth, delicious. But it won't come out of lovey-doveyness."

Love is feared because it belongs to the mother: hostility, a fight, contempt and hate are better circumstances for sexual union. There are schizoid elements in all this.[9] Again and again he belabours the world at large, "out there" where ordinary couples are horribly repeating the sexual meaninglessness of the parents. The "new earth" won't come from the "lovey-dovey" feelings in ordinary people such as Lawrence sneers at throughout his later works: the new era demands anything but a normal human love—it demands (as with Gross) the sexuality of hate.

New life will come from those who can be *real men* and dare to act in this way. "He had dared to do it", thinks Connie, when she is sodomised in hostility by Mellors, who is angry with Hilda. In *Mr Noon* the perverted act is performed in hostile revenge for the infidelity with Stanley. So, our new world is to come from revengeful hate—directed against the fears of the mother lurking in the vagina, and of the womb as a grave: as we shall see, in the closing pages of *Mr Noon* the Alps themselves look like a woman's body that threatens to trap Gilbert in the grave, in his distress.

Besides sodomy, the other guarantee against the threats of love (which, as the schizoid individual fears, is "horrible merging") is the dog-and-cat kind of relationship: one which is in continual conflict: "It will come out of the sheer, pure, consummated fight. . . ."

Earlier Gilbert had reflected that Johanna was "more like a blunderbuss than a lily": and (p. 173) "what was the good of love that wasn't a fight". When Johanna-Frieda was unfaithful, however, what did one do about that? The answer seems to be that she must be possessed anally in revenge so that in this there is a new "bursting" into a new dimension:

> "Where the soul fights blindly for air, for life, a new space."

And out of this strong symbolic solution develops the Lawrentian political programme:

> "The matrix of the old mother-days and mother idea is hell beyond hell at last, that which nourished us and our race becomes the intolerable dry prison of our death, which is the history of man. . . ."

So we have the clue to the growing tendency in the late Lawrence to wish the world destroyed, so long as he was all right with his woman.

One might even argue that the whole Lawrentian position here, which so powerfully influenced the "culture and environment" programme in English in education, was rooted in Lawrence's projections of his problems of woman, sex, and gender, over "society": the "ugly, ugly" passage about Tevershall in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was, after all, a key passage in this political theme.

The Lawrence industry is clearly no help to us here. Certainly it can give us no help in resisting Lawrence's falsities and false solutions—whether to the problems of sexual relationships or war. Except to provide some more revealing quotations (*Letters*, Vol. III, p. 649, 20 January 1921):

> "If I knew how to, I'd really join myself to the revolutionary socialists now. I think the time has come for a real struggle. That's the only thing I care about: the death struggle. I don't care for politics. But I know there *must* and *should* be a deadly revolution very soon, and I would take part in it if I knew how."

Nothing surely could be more dangerous than projecting one's death-wish on to the political scene. For Lawrence's revolution was not for democracy: he hated democracy as did Otto Gross. The fear of women, as in *Kangaroo*, and *The Plumed Serpent*, leads in quite a different direction, disturbingly fascistic.

*Mr Noon* failed as a work of art because Lawrence could not get the tone right. This is not merely a question of style. The unfinished, unpublished novel shows him in a deep moral conflict, which is also an existential conflict. The best part of the book is the middle section which is the prose parallel to the honeymoon poems: in the descriptions of the Tyrol and the valley of the Isar, these pages are beautiful.

So, too, are the moments captured from the early love affair—as when the lovers are surprised by a caller in their cheap hotel, or by Johanna's mother, the Baroness, whom they see coming up the road when they are only hastily clothed after an act of love: or when they try to cope with a huge feather bed, or enjoy the simple food and village life of remote and lovely places: or when they sleep and make love in an uncomfortable and icy hay hut: or when Johanna mocks him by pretending to be a dog on all fours. The world is seen in these scenes with all the intensity and meaning that love yields: and, as so often in Lawrence, it is when he can bring to life a real woman to challenge him that he achieves real art, his daemon can really speak.

The failure was due to a number of elements which Lawrence could not solve. The protagonist, Gilbert, is George Henry Neville (a close friend of Lawrence's youth in Nottingham, c. 1910) in Part I, and close to Lawrence in the rest of the book; but he is never endowed with Lawrence's zest, intelligence, fervour, passion or creativity: he is a cipher, a ninny, who is simply steered about, occasionally thinking to himself, "By Jove, this is a real love affair". Although Lawrence tells us that this couple live on a superior plane, in "the love of two splendid opposites" in which she is "a she cat who would give him claw for claw", Gilbert is never the forceful

[9] See Marguerite Beede Howe, *The Art of the Self in D. H. Lawrence* (Ohio University Press, 1977).

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Lawrence who cried "I am the master!" or who stands up to his woman standing up to him.[10] Moreover, she is more of a trollop than a tiger. Lawrence tells us they are "beautiful brindled creatures"; but Johanna remains an unscrupulous baggage and Gilbert an unattractive nonentity. And while Lawrence strives to turn the story into comedy, all that comes over is an unpleasant facetiousness, often directed against the reader, whom he seems to identify with some hostile Sunday newspaper critic who had offended him.

IN *MR NOON*, some of the sexual episodes are simply unbelievable: it is hardly possible to believe they were written by the same man who had written *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. Gilbert, for instance, is commended by Johanna (as reviewers have gleefully pointed out) for having made love three times in a quarter of an hour—"So well, too." It is impossible to know what to say about such a report; one doesn't want to labour its ludicrousness and impossibility. What can Lawrence have meant? Why did Frieda never correct it?

There are moments all the same which ring true and beautiful:

> ". . . as she rolled over in the pallid, pure, bluey-effervescent stream, and he saw her magnificent broad white shoulders, and her knot of hair, envy, and an almost hostile desire filled him. She came from the water full-blown like a water-flower, naked and delighted with her element. And she lay spread in the sun on the clear shingle. And he sat in his lean, unyielding nudity upon a great pinkish boulder, and he looked at her, still with the dark eyes of a half-hostile desire and envy. Strange enemies they were, as a white seagull and a gold land-hawk are enemies. And he brooded, looking at her as her strong bosom rose and fell, and the full breasts lay sideways. And with a sort of inward rage he wished he could see her without any darkness of desire disturbing his soul."

This is perhaps evidently a first draft (there are too many "ands"); but it is the true Lawrence, in which the deeper sexual polarity and the "difference" is *done*.

THERE ARE MOMENTS when what I call the "true" Lawrence surfaces, and I would like to get a rope round those—for it is the loss of this Lawrence that, it seems to me, spoils the book.

Gilbert, for instance, as he becomes involved with Johanna who has taken on Dammling as a lover in between episodes with Gilbert, reflects on "the tangle and nastiness of it all". And later:

> ". . . he felt wretched, and not in his own skin. He felt thoroughly humiliated, and now knew he was embarking on a new little sea of ignominy."

And then in talking about the Baroness, Lawrence writes: "And having all her life to enjoy an unfaithful, gambling husband." The question must arise—if, as with Johanna, it doesn't matter if one is unfaithful, where did this "placing" note come from? Are we after all with those English values which the Alps showed up as so narrow and tight? Of course, Lawrence has to correct himself and say it is all at an end: "*cul de sac* and white-livered fawning." But more than once he reveals his true (which is for him his inherited) sense of sexual authenticity, and his grasp of those values and standards—embodied one might say in the great English novel—about man-woman relationships: those values and standards Gilbert is made to dismiss as "tight" at the beginning of the book.

One may in the English novel trace a moral concern with authenticity and fidelity through from Jane Austen to George Eliot and Henry James, who has a deep contempt for those who are trivial or disloyal in relationships. No doubt, when we encompass (say) Sextus Propertius or Colette, we feel that the question is more open. But Lawrence was an Englishman, whose own essential feeling was for fidelity. For an English writer it is surely important to be true to his English inclinations, which cannot but be "puritanical", and Lawrence could not pretend to be a German.[11]

But, of course, Lawrence had to be careful what he said about marriage, since he was destroying one. I don't suppose there was much point in trying to save the Weekley marriage: but clearly Weekley adored his wife and was full of passion for her. However, there is the question of the children, and the fact that Lawrence, as Weekley's student, had betrayed him. Much of what Lawrence wrote afterwards is filled with guilt and self-justification after the Weekley affair, and so there are many aspects of fidelity which he wants to play down.

Lawrence, instead, wants to make out a good case for marriage being "sacred" only in so far as, day to day, it is rooted in sexual passion—in "the proper feelings" rather than bonds or long-term certificated commitment: this theory of marriage arises out of his need for self-vindication, and picks up those elements in Grossian liberation theory that seemed to him useful.

The fly in the ointment is Frieda herself, on whom Johanna is in some degree modelled, as the notes and comments in this edition confirm. It seems possible that a strong reason for not completing and publishing the book was that it was too revealing a portrait of Frieda. And it certainly makes clear to us the degree to which Frieda had experienced, and had been influenced by, and *admired*, the Otto Gross whose position was one of contempt for all normal human bonds.

Frieda and Else, here called Johanna and Lotte, are shown by this book to be unscrupulous and deceitful. They have learnt from Gross not only to be compulsively promiscuous ("In nice men I understand such a lot that I feel *forced* to have them"—Johanna): but also to erect into moral principles and political programmes their own immoralist and duplicitous behaviour. It was surely Gross who taught "Jo-

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[10] For an account of a deranged attack by Lawrence on Frieda ("he went over the edge of sanity"), see Frieda's letter to J. Middleton Murry, 19 December 1951, in Frieda Lawrence, *The Memoirs and Correspondence*, ed. J. W. Tedlock (1969), p. 341.

[11] Geoffrey Strickland has pointed out to me that Frieda was evidently brought to respect Lawrence's specifically English view of marriage: see her Introduction to *The First Lady Chatterley*.

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hanna" to say, "I think the noblest thing is to overcome jealousy" (p. 165); and to turn her promiscuity into a belief that "I believe one should love as much as one can"—which really means "fuck as much as one can". We are on the road to the Chatterley maxim that "warm-hearted fucking" will redeem the world.

We see Johanna first in the train, being carried one intercity stop further because a Japanese stranger is feeling her knee under a table in the restaurant-car. Unashamedly reporting this, she declares after meeting another Japanese:

> "I always knew after that that I wanted a brown baby. Yet there I've got an honest English husband and two sweet boys, and I'm adored for being a white snowflower. Don't you think it strange?"

She jibes at Gilbert's Englishness, because she believes he, too, wants the "snowflower". This is a jibe at the cold English belief that fidelity matters, and deceit and betrayal are reprehensible. So what are English people to make of it? Johanna boldly reveals that her affair with Eberhard (Gross) was quite recent, long after she was married: and after having Gilbert she immediately entertains Captain Dammling who is estranged from his wife. Other lovers are mentioned, without even being filled in as people. Then towards the end of the novel Johanna suddenly gives herself to Stanley, and Gilbert has not to mind; even after the rapturous honeymon record of the Isar Valley. Though there is clearly an impulse in Lawrence to present some of this with irony, the ground has gone from under his feet that would make irony, or even proper "placing", possible. All he can do, all his "daemon" can do, is to register an undercurrent of misery.

At best, *Mr Noon* is the prose parallel to *Look! We Have Come Through!* There, in the best poems, we have the Lawrence whom Leavis upheld as being in the line from Blake and Dickens—upholding the deeper needs of the true self and the creative power of love. In "Bei Hennef":

> *Only the twilight now, and the soft "Sh!" of the river*
> *That will last for ever . . .*
> *And at last I know my love for you is here . . .*
> *You are the call, and I am the answer,*
> *You are the wish, and I am the fulfilment,*
> *You are the night and I the day.*
> *What else? It is perfect enough.*
> *It is perfectly complete,*
> *You and I,*
> *What more—?*

And "On the Balcony":

> *—what have we but each other?*

And in the context of the *Gloire de Dijon* rose poems:

> *I am myself at last: now I achieve my very self. . . .*

—and so on and on:

> *So I hope I shall spend eternity*
> *With my face down buried between her breasts. . . .*
> "Song of a Man Who is Loved"

> *Not I, not I, but the wind that blows through me!*
> "Song of a Man Who has Come Through"

We can relate these poems to the concepts explored in Leavis's essay on Blake: the sense that one does not belong to oneself, and the sense of the *Ahnung*—the cosmic "inkling" or sense of obligation and responsibility that comes with love.

How can we believe that such a lover could greet the news of his woman's infidelity with the remark, "'Never mind, my love', he said. 'Never mind. Never mind. We do things we don't know we're doing'"—and then to *guy* that response?

> "Johanna did not at all care for the conclusion 'that it did not matter'. Those marvellous pearls of spiritual love. 'I love you—and so what did it matter!' fell on completely stony ground. . . ."

Yet Gilbert has said that:

> ". . . things we don't know we are doing . . . they don't signify. They don't signify really, do they? They don't really mean anything, do they? I love you—and so what does it matter."

And yet Lawrence must ridicule this response, too.

Gilbert tries to kiss Johanna passionately: but she is mute and unresponsive, quite unyielding. What exactly is happening? Why does she tell him?

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"'Didn't you *know*? Didn't you suspect anything?' said Johanna, rather gloomy.

'No', he answered, with his clear face of innocence.

'No—never. It wouldn't have occurred to me.'"

She feels "rather put out" by his passionate spiritual forgiveness; "put in a falser position than ever before". It is (under the confusions of Grossian philosophy) even as if *she* is the victim of humiliation rather than he: "forgiveness is a humiliating thing to the one forgiven." But wasn't the humiliation his?

That this is so is evident in the undercurrents of those last pages. Gilbert is afraid of the mountains:

"Gilbert was really rather frightened. There was something terrific about this upper world. Things which looked small and near were rather far, and when one reached them, they were big, great masses where one expected stones, jagged valley where one saw just a hollow groove."

Gilbert/Lawrence's world is totally upheaved.

"Such terrible, such raw, such stupendous masses of the rock-element heaved and confused. Such terrible order in it all . . . he felt all the suspended mass of unutterably fierce rocks round him, he knew it was not human, not life-size. It was all bigger than life-size, much bigger, and fearful."

It is just after this moment that Johanna appears with Stanley, having just been unfaithful to Gilbert.

Time and time again there are references to the Christ figures and their symbolism form becomes clear:

". . . a last little crucifix—the small wooden Christ all silvery-naked, a bit of old oak, under his hood. And neither Stanley nor Gilbert made any jokes. He was so old and rudimentary."

But Christ is also an image of humiliation and betrayal. In his anguish over woman, Gilbert (pp. 266-67) finds his mother ideal in the mountains (italics added):

". . . a great peak, a magnificent wedge of iron thrust into the upper air, and slashed with snow-slashes as if it were dazzlingly alive . . . it was one of the perfect things of all life, that single great sky-living blade of rock. . . .

He had to go to a brow to look clear *at his queen*. She was beyond this valley—and beyond other valleys. Other, blunter peaks rose about her. Yet she lifted her marvellous dark slopes clear. . . . And he was satisfied—one of the eternal satisfactions that man can find on his life-way. He felt a pure, immortal satisfaction—a perfected aloneness."

The infidelity, already done, drives Lawrence/Gilbert back to a terrible aloneness with the Dead Mother as a peak of Mother Earth. And when they descend, they see another Christ (italics added):

"At the back sat a ghastly life-size Christ, streaked livid with blood, and with an awful, dying, almost murderous-looking face. He was so powerful too—*and like a man in the flush of life who realises he has just been murdered*."

The Lawrence industry notes tell us this is in a chapel near St Jacob at Larch (see "Christs in the Tyrol" in *Phoenix* 85, and "The Crucifix Across the Mountains" in *Twilight in Italy*)—but it does not tell us that this is how Lawrence, from his true daemon, saw himself after Frieda has murdered *him*, even in the flush of life. The letters INRI over Christ's head are jeered at (p. 268) by the man who has betrayed Gilbert as spelling "Inry" (italics added):

"'There's Inry selling joints', said Stanley sardonically. But Gilbert was startled, shocked, and he could not forget. Why? *Why this awful thing in a fine, big new shrine? Why this?*"

FROM THIS TIME ON his position is totally falsified, because he must try to exculpate Frieda—or at least try to establish an immoralist atmosphere in which questions of damage, harm, murder and the destruction of meaning do not matter. Yet the daemon knows better:

"Gilbert felt rather in an alas-and-alas mood. His spirits had all gone flat."

The profound corruptness of Lawrence's compromise with Frieda's promiscuity is indicated by his falsification (p. 278):

"The words fell into the deep geysers of his soul, leaving it apparently untroubled. But in the end the irritable waters would boil up over this same business."

The falsity of Lawrence's tone in *Mr Noon* is utterly alien to everything that we admire in the achievement of the great novelist. If there is one thing that we love in Lawrence, it is the sense of total integrity between lovers—Paul to Miriam, Tom to Lydia, Will to Anna, Birkin to Ursula. Even in the couple in "Odour of Chrysanthemums" there is a deep loyalty in marriage, despite their terrible estrangement: a loyalty of the destiny of souls. Suppose any of these had had sexual love with another partner, in a spirit of "Why not?". It would be as if the skies had fallen.

But in Chapter XVI of *Mr Noon* Lawrence aggressively defends Johanna's sexual activity with "Rudolf"—then ridicules Rudolf for becoming emotionally involved and hurt, while turning vituperatively upon the reader in defence of his own tone of facetious libertinism. Here *Mr Noon* reveals in a deeply disturbing way that streak of coarse immoralism, and corruption (like the toleration of murder in *The Plumed Serpent*), that affects much of his later work. In this incident alone, *Mr Noon* reveals the catastrophe that overtook Lawrence.

A facetious tone is employed to disguise the falsification of the reality:

"In whizzed the train for Paris, out stepped Mr Noon, in a new suit and with a Gladstone bag.

'I was awfully afraid you wouldn't come', said Johanna.

'Here I am', said Gilbert. After which Johanna felt a perhaps even purer compassion for her poor Rudolf. And he, to his credit, found compassion even more humiliating than impotence. Whereupon he wrote quite long

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poems, in which Gilbert all-unwittingly fluttered in a dark *Unglücksrabe*, raven of woe."

The tone is hopelessly wrong: it sinks to something like that of stage sex farce. Beneath the surface, too, is a maliciousness: ". . . he, to his credit, found compassion even more humiliating than impotence." What exactly is the joke, when a man is humiliated by either? The tone is "serve him right", and the phrase "to his credit" adds a sadistic little twist to the pleasure in another's pain and discomfort.

There follows a passage which attempts to justify Johanna/Frieda's sexual attentions to "Rudolf", in between cataclysmic sexual episodes with Gilbert, leading to Rudolf's humiliation and Gilbert's being double-dealt with. The reader who might object is told that such compassionate sex therapy on Frieda/Johanna's part is really noble; and when Rudolf came to want her to love him, that represented an idealism which is the equivalent of wanting a baby's dummy. Any male reader who has doubts may himself be suspected of suffering from the same kind of infantilism. He is told that he needn't read the nasty book any more—for it is a story of a woman who is not going to show one spark of nobility, but will follow her sensual desire wherever it leads her. Lawrence has obviously been rattled by being told by a critic his heroines are "not noble". But what his splenetic tone and fury conceal is the reality of his heroine's "unscrupulous" pursuit of "naked desire"—about which he was, in some part of himself, doubtful in his own woman.

> ". . . I ask you, especially you, *gentle* reader, whether it is not a noble deed to give to a poor self-mistrustful Rudolf substantial proof of his own virility. We say substantial advisedly. Nothing ideal in the air. Substantial proof of his own abundant adequate virility. Would it have been more noble, under the circumstances, to give him the baby's dummy—teat of ideal sympathy and a kind breast? Should she have said: 'Dear Rudolf, our two spirits, divested of this earthly dross of physicality, shall fly untrammelled.' . . . Should she have proceeded . . . to whoosh with him in unison of pure love through the blue empyrean, as poor Paolo and Francesca were forced to whoosh on the black winds of hell. . . ."

The answer to Lawrence here is—do sexual acts have a meaning, or not? Does *love* have any meaning at all? Only two pages before, Johanna shuts her door and we have the religious language of sexual meaning:

> "The sultriness and lethargy of his soul had broken in a storm of desire for her, a storm which shook and swept him at varying intervals all his life long. . . ."

So that act of passion had a meaning which is to last all Gilbert/Lawrence's life. But only a few lines later, Rudolf, who was "not happy with his wife" and does not "know what he lived for", is given "the cup of consolation" by Johanna:

> "Johanna, of course, who took her sex as a religion, felt herself bound to administer the cup of consolation to him."

We have seen that Johanna felt she must give her sexual favours as a form of "understanding": but we surely cannot but feel that in her Grossian enthusiasm, turning from healing Gilbert to healing Rudolf, she has reduced the meaning of the sexual act—to a panacea, a mere cure. Lawrence's reference to Paolo and Francesca is enough to remind us that love can be as strong as death: that is, as a source of meaning. And while we might say there is something limited about a love that does not include sensual fulfilment, it is quite another thing to approve of sensuality that reduces sex to the meaninglessness of a poultice. It is his uncertainty over this dilemma that prompts some of the most distasteful paragraphs in the whole of Lawrence:

> "Is the baby's dummy-teat really the patent of true female spirituality and nobility, or is it a fourpence-halfpenny fraud? Gentle reader, I know *your* answer. But unfortunately my critics are *usually* of the sterner sex, which sex by now is so used to the dummy that its gentle lips flutter if the india rubber gag of female *spiritual* nobility is taken away for one moment."

LAWRENCE NEVER COMPLETED or published *Mr Noon*, because it was a record of insoluble problems. For one thing, it is a record of a humiliation. When they see a crucifix, Stanley sings the music-hall song about Henry VIII, a notoriously fickle husband; the symbolism of the comparison between a supposedly sexually promiscuous King and the King of the Jews is obvious. But, as we know, Lawrence identified closely with Christ—and the end of the book is full of those images of crucified figures of Christ, some broken and dilapidated. When depressed, Lawrence used to sit with his head bowed, and we can see in these broken hanging figures a picture of his inner soul: Frieda's infidelity, he is telling us, crucified him. Emily Kahn, in *Lorenzo* (1975), says:

> "Lawrence was always jealous and had already accused Frieda of betraying him with a woodcutter with whom she spent several hours on a island on the Isar—and he might well have been right."

I used to find this difficult to believe: but now I believe it must be true. In the *Collected Poems* there is a poem ("Meeting Among the Mountains") about one of the crucifixes:

> *. . . at the foot of the sunken Christ*
> *I stand in a chill of anguish, trying to say*
> *The joy I bought was not too highly priced.*

What does this mean? I believe it may mean that he wishes he could get right out of a situation in which the woman he loves is compulsively unfaithful: but he cannot, because he wouldn't now know where to go. This is the price of his joy.

The experience obviously brought out Lawrence's deepest fears of woman—the Earth-Woman-as-Death now menaces him (this is after a row between Johanna and Gilbert about a postcard he was writing to a previous girl-friend):

> "The sudden dark, hairy ravines in which he was trapped: all made him feel he was caught, shut in down below there. He felt tiny, like a dwarf among the great thighs and ravines of the mountains. There is a Baudelaire poem which

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> tells of Nature, like a vast woman lying spread, and man, a tiny insect, creeping between her knees and under her thighs, fascinated. Gilbert felt powerful revulsion against the great slopes and particularly against the tree-dark, hairy ravines in which he was caught."

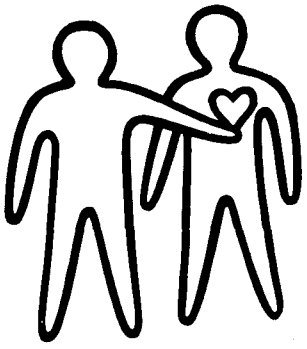
It was this terror and pain associated with the "dark hairy ravines" which made it impossible for Lawrence to finish *Mr Noon*.

Its publication enables us to find the beginnings of Lawrence's later development, towards a greater interest in power than in love, even in the early works. *The White Peacock*, indeed, is the vain woman who excretes on the tombstone, defiling it, and who spoils life—so that a love relationship with a man is safer and more pure. In *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow* we have more agitation arising from fear and hatred of woman than much literary criticism recognises, while the consequent despair and destructiveness are projected out over the world, which Birkin wanted to destroy at times, leaving creation to begin all over again: and as Lawrence at times wanted, so long as he could be all right with his woman.

There are dangerous political undertones in this kind of impulse, while the message that the world should be destroyed so that we can begin all over again is one which represents a serious abandonment of responsibility, to "life" and to the evolution of mind, as the only centre of the capacity to know in the universe, as far as we are aware. The impulse to subdue woman is no solution to our problems of manhood and womanhood. We need to say as much, having been made aware more clearly of Lawrence's problems by *Mr Noon*—not least in tribute to the best in his creative endeavour.

# E Pluribus Unisex?

## *Gender & Identity in the US Novel*—By CHRISTOPHER BIGSBY



THE AMERICAN obsession with sex began early. For the Puritans nothing was innocent. Mixed dancing was described as "gynecandrical" and "sitting together on the Lord's day" was an offence. They were, to be sure, no less assiduous than us in pursuing carnal pleasures —see Roger Thompson's delightful and informative *Sex in Middlesex* (University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, Mass.) which tells of buggery in Boston and incest in Ipswich —but they paid the price in guilt, a sexual Danegeld which, it seems, Americans are to pay forever.

A direct descendant of the persecuting Judge Hathorne—who sent many a "witch" to her death for "possession" of men—Nathaniel Hawthorne placed not merely sexuality at the centre of what, in the circumstances, I forbear to call his seminal text, *The Scarlet Letter*, but also sexual betrayal (of woman by man, of man by woman, of an individual by her society, or the self by its own compulsions and aspirations). In other words, sexuality was invested with a symbolic status; a radical schism in American society found expression in sexual metaphor.

The scarlet "A" embroidered on Hester Prynne's breast is an ambiguous cipher in which adultery and America are compacted into a single sign. At the beginning of the novel she stands alone. Only Eve, it seems, is to be expelled from this dark Eden. And so the fractured sexual relationship stands in for a fractured culture, broken apart by its own contradictory commitments. *E pluribus unum* is not merely a desperate motto of American togetherness, an amulet, a charm against divisiveness inscribed on American coinage; it is an expression of that need for oneness which apparently ever evades the American in search of definition. And the sexual relationship offers an analogue and at times even a substitute for that grail, a symbolic exchange which, like money, sustains its value only so long as its force as symbol is accepted. No wonder the narrator in Saul Bellow's new novel refers to Eros as "a broken spirit between the gods and human beings".

In the 19th century the American novel tended to focus on descriptions of male endeavour in which sex is sublimated in action or coyly transformed into homo-erotic pairings. In the work of Poe and Melville the transitive sexual experience is even denied by the reflexivity of incest no less than by the denial of heterosexual union. If a stable sexual partnership represented both the narrative objective and the social context of the English novel, the sexual instability of the classic American novel implied a social world which was unformed and insecure. The repeated failure of the male/female relationship in American fiction, the inability of dislocated halves to form a whole, is a social fact and political reality displaced into the sphere of personal relationships and sexual identity. There is, moreover, frequently a softness, a gentleness, an intuitive spirituality about the central characters in that fiction (Deerslayer, Huckleberry Finn, Billy Budd) which hints almost at androgyny. Surely Hawthorne's Dimmesdale is such a figure, a man who has fathered a child but whose social role as conscience of the community is usurped by the woman whom custom insists he has wronged but who commands history as action, as her creator commands history as narrative.

This latter fact particularly annoys Louise Desalvo in her feminist reading of Hawthorne's work. But then there is a

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great deal that annoys Louise Desalvo. A critic with a thesis, she presses down her crown of thorns upon the head of a writer whom she reinvents the better to sustain his martyrdom.[1] And with the drops of blood go every trace of irony, ambiguity and, most alarmingly, humanity. Determined to identify a misogynistic, ahistorical, self-justifying tract, she applies a literal reading to a book in which Hawthorne is at pains to lay claim to imaginative no less than moral freedom.

Anyone who can say, as I swear she does, that "the most important . . . issue . . . is whether or not Hawthorne himself was woman-loving, woman-hating, or ambivalent towards women", is likely to prove an unreliable guide to the subtleties of literature. In her eyes it becomes the simplest of substitution codes, to be deciphered and demystified by the rational analyst, and made relevant by accommodation to contemporary tropes. Thus, *The House of the Seven Gables* can "be read as the forerunner of American television commercials in which women sing and smile as they scrub floors and wash their husbands' shirts". Well, yes, it can—if you have the literary sensibility of a quarter-back.

Far more interesting is why, given a literature in which women's civilising role turns into threat (whether it be Rip Van Winkle's shrewish wife, Deerslayer's seductive Judith, the civilising pressure of Twain's Miss Watson or the Marshal's young wife in "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky"), Hawthorne chooses to reverse the image, shattering a confident patriarchalism on the self-assurance of a woman who breeds the future out of her own resistance. On that we hear nothing coherent from Louise Desalvo.

Nor was the codification of the social and the political in the sexual merely a factor of the mid-19th century. For the naturalists (Crane, Norris, Dreiser), the tensions within the sexual relationship did not merely mirror those in society, but were an expression of an alienation and anomie which they saw as endemic to the modern experience. Beginning, like Melville's sub-sub-librarian, with the conviction that the real should be rendered by accumulation of detail, they too end by seeing in the disproportion between desire and fulfilment an expression of more than social frustration. Tensions which elsewhere might have been registered as ideological facts are here rendered as sexual politics.

For F. Scott Fitzgerald the process was very self-conscious. Daisy Buchanan and Nicole Diver (the latter herself a fractured sensibility) are presented as emblems of a corruption which at its extreme can only adequately be captured by the erosion of gender identity—the sexually ambivalent Jordan Baker, or the male and female homosexuals who for Fitzgerald no less than Hemingway became an image of that anarchy which they suspected was inseparable from wealth and power.

NOT THAT Hemingway himself was as sexually confident as he liked to appear—at least not according to Kenneth Lynn, whose new biography rests on the androgynous elements in a man more usually dismissed as an

[1] *Nathaniel Hawthorne*. By LOUISE DESALVO. Harvester Press, £18.95, paper £5.95.


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incorrigible sexist.[2] So *The Sun Also Rises*, with its ironic sexual title, renders the American century in terms of an impotent man and a boyish woman. Indeed, Lynn identifies the origin of Jake Barnes as lying in the name and address of the sexually ambivalent Djuna Barnes of the Hotel Jacob. Likewise, in *A Farewell to Arms*, Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley virtually exchange sexual roles just as, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Maria is part sexual fantasy and part androgynous being, the other side of Robert Jordan's sensibility. In that novel, indeed, the sexual possession of Maria by the fascists is offered as a highly self-conscious image of the rape of Spain: sexual fact as political metaphor.

For Lynn, this tendency to blur the edges of gender identity had its roots in Hemingway's hatred of his mother and subsequently of one of his wives as in his sanctifying of the woman he betrayed. The biographer offers details of his sexual ambivalence—dressed like a girl by his threatening mother, anxious about his masculinity, fearful of self-exposure—the suppressions of his feelings being paralleled by a literary style which itself turns on suppression. The literal androgyny of his posthumous novel—*The Garden of Eden*—merely confirms a sexual instability reinforced by what is presented as a succession of voracious women, including, of course, one who exercised a considerable influence on his work—Gertrude Stein.

Granted Kenneth Lynn's tendency to read back and forth between novel and life as though the membrane between them were wholly permeable, the evidence does seem to hand. However, surely Hemingway is at his most American in his tendency to seek a sexual correlative for his social, moral, and even political convictions, while his androgynous figures have their counterparts not only in Fitzgerald's works but in Nathanael West's *Miss Lonelyhearts*, as later in Carson McCullers's *The Ballad of the Sad Café*, James Purdy's *Malcolm*, and Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckinridge*—all of which also charge the sexual relationship with an energy derived from and directed at issues which elsewhere might have been addressed in more clearly sociopolitical terms. *To Have and Have Not*, in particular, is a political novel whose politics have been sexualised.

SAUL BELLOW was born in Canada; he lives in Chicago. He hasn't moved far. What he has gained is a useful perspective, up there on the northern rim of America in a city state which is itself a kind of border territory. He has an objectivity, a perspective, a purchase on America which comes from simultaneous inclusion and exclusion. By training a social scientist, he steps back and observes; but he is scarcely immune from the pressures to which his work responds. The insecure marriages, the fractured relationships, the attenuated psycho-sexual laments doubtless have sharp relevance to a man whose own twelve-year marriage (his fourth) has recently ended, but they are also rooted in his sense of the collapse of moral structure.

*More Die of Heartbreak*, Bellow's new novel,[3] concerns itself with the failure to adjust to the real. His principal problem is that mask and face are no longer distinguishable. Afraid of vulnerability, the individual constructs a false self, and in such a world of unreality there can be no real meeting, no real structure of meaning to offer coherence and direction. The failure of the sexual relationship thus stands for more fundamental dissonances, more profoundly disturbing surrenders of imagination and will.

Bellow has warned against androgyny, against a deliberate blurring of sexual difference as a means of access to power or a strategy of evasion. Alarmed at what he sees as a masculinisation of women, the denial of gender as a mechanism of social change, he deplores equally the fabrications of the male ego. But, as elsewhere in his work, the sexual relationship functions as image as well as fact. Here, no less than in *Herzog*, he is concerned to identify the ineluctable and the irreducible; to deny a fashionable self-dramatising that can only lead away from the real.

*More Die of Heartbreak*, besides being an observation by his central character, a botanist asked to comment on the impact of radiation on plant life, is also an expression of Bellow's serious conviction, in a comic novel, that the enemy is less apocalypse than a steadfast commitment to unreality. The denial of definition, the refusal of moral priorities, the playful annihilation of the real bring us closer, he implies, to the extinction which we fear but which we so wilfully anticipate in our private and public behaviour. This is a novel in which the sexual quest stands for much more besides, as it has throughout so much of American writing. Thus a character recalls an observation that sex might be a diabolical way to recover paradise. Certainly his narrator observes a "search for sexual enchantments as the universal nostrum", a desire for dominance and submission which has its clear social correlative, for, as his narrator observes: "The main enterprise was America itself, and the increase of its powers. Submission to those powers made something of you." Being screwed makes you part of the Great Experiment.

Eugene O'Neill thought the problem was that Americans were prepared to trade their souls for the world. For Bellow, too, the restless striving for achievement rings hollow because, as he explained in a recent *Sunday Times* interview, of "the shabbiness, [the] nullity of . . . personal lives" which "have no inner cultivation". Such people have "shut off access to their own souls", and "where there is no correspondence between inner life and outer, you're a barbarian". A primary image of this process lies in the reduction of personal relationships to the merely sexual. "Why is it", Bellow asks, "that people's interest is so easily exhausted when they live together? . . . I have the sense, not the conviction, that it's because we view each other with a physical literalness—principally for sexual purposes. . . . It's idle to talk about love as long as we define it externally. . . . You use up the other person just like any other commodity."

Accused of misogyny by "McCarthy style" feminist critics, he insists that, "It's not misogyny: it's a lamentation for all parties." The "ordeal of desire" is a product of a literalness of

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[2] *Hemingway*. By KENNETH LYNN. Simon & Schuster, $24.95, £16.00.

[3] *More Die of Heartbreak*. By SAUL BELLOW. Secker & Warburg, £10.95.

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imagination which substitutes physical attraction for genuine relationship. The sexual adventurer, for whom physiological crevasses, plains and hills are presumed to contain both mystery and satisfaction, ends up inhabiting a world drained of both. Just as "human possibilities are corrupted by the neglect of history, culture, morals, ethics", so they are by the trading of human complexity for immediate satisfaction.

America, with its topless bars, massage parlours, porno movies, adult motels, and hard-core magazines, continues its search for happiness in the most unlikely of places. "SPEAK TO A TOTALLY NUDE WOMAN: 25 CENTS", invites a huge billboard in San Francisco, while the companions of presidential candidates and rogue marines are invited to take their clothes off for *Playboy* as though the mysteries of the political world might be revealed through the simple exposure of flesh, and urban aphasia end when confronted with the naked truth. Where once the self-improvement tracts in railroad-station bookstalls related to money and social confidence, today they set norms of sexual achievement—and this in the country which pioneered the sex institute, and responded to Freud with uncritical enthusiasm.

In Bellow's novel even a would-be cocksman is disturbed by a sex show in Japan, as the crudity of its power becomes an ironic comment on the rationality of his academic pursuits. Like the black man in *Mr Sammler's Planet*, who exposes himself to the protagonist of that novel in an ironic and confident gesture of power, he recognises its destabilising strength: sex as an image of social, political and psychological dislocation.

*E pluribus unum. Copulo ergo sum.* Have a nice day!

# The Maternal Landscape

## *On Henry Moore—By* ANNA ADAMS

THE HENRY MOORE folk-myth, as it has evolved in the last 40 years, begins by stressing his humble origins. The famous sculptor was born the son of a miner in a two-up, two-down terrace house in Castleford, South Yorkshire. He was the youngest boy of several children, though he had a younger sister who died as a child. There were times during his boyhood when they were so poor that the children could have only half an egg each for their breakfasts. When the father was out of work the mother went out charring; she was a tirelessly hardworking woman who kept the family together through thick and thin. The father, though uneducated, had taught himself to play the violin, and believed in education as a way towards a better life for his children; he expected them to take school very seriously.

The young Henry conceived the ambition to be a great sculptor when he heard Michelangelo described in a Sunday-school talk. He was encouraged to draw, paint, and make pottery by a young art-mistress at his grammar school; but when he had matriculated his father dissuaded him from going on to art school, saying that he should qualify for something secure. So he became a pupil-teacher, and was miserable. He rescued himself by volunteering for the Army in 1917. When he was in the trenches and his comrades were being killed all round him, he swore that if he got out alive he would go all out to become a sculptor. So after the War he enrolled at Leeds Art School and worked with great enthusiasm and diligence, earning a scholarship to the Royal College of Art in London.

Once there he worked harder than ever, and had all the museums of London to study in. He travelled to Florence and discovered Masaccio, returned, and thought very deeply about the nature of sculpture, deciding that "truth to material" was a very important part of it. Walking over the limestone clints in Yorkshire, and observing stone weathered into streamlined shapes, and dissolved by rain until pierced by holes, was supposed to have been one of the illuminating experiences on his road towards himself.

He had his early struggles and all the usual difficulties in being recognised, and he supported himself, to begin with, by art-school teaching. After working as a War Artist in World War II, he became a household word, partly because of his *Shelter Sketchbook*, which contained drawings of sleeping citizens in London's Underground during the blitz.

In the post-War years he got big commissions, employed assistants, built huge studios and almost became a factory; he was known worldwide as a Great Sculptor.

Roger Berthoud's *The Life of Henry Moore*[1] denies none of this, though the half-eggs of childhood and the limestone clints are not mentioned, and his painstaking research fills in the background very thoroughly—so thoroughly that we begin to feel slightly disillusioned. There is just a hint of Henry Reed's *A Very Great Man Indeed* about the book. The author doesn't allow himself to think disloyal thoughts, let alone write them, but such words as "repetitious", "dogmatic", and "homespun wisdom" are allowed to escape, so certain doubts lurk between the lines, however firmly the plainly-knit and largely factual prose tries to keep them decently covered.

The chapter headings alone give the broad sweep of the

[1] *The Life of Henry Moore.* By ROGER BERTHOUD. Faber, £14.95.

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Moore story: "Childhood and School"; "Briefly to War"; "Art Student in Leeds"; "Student in London and Abroad"; "Public Débuts and Teaching"; "Marriage and a Masterpiece"; "Hampstead, Chelsea and Kent"; "Surrealism, Constructivism and Socialism"; "Shelter Drawings and the Northampton Madonna"; "Via New York and Venice to International Fame": and so on. Once the grand plateau of success is reached, it proves to be rather monotonous, like an endless desert strewn with monuments, littered with dropped names and populated by stuffed shirts. The chapters entitled "The Lincoln Center Piece", "Toronto and the Tate Gift", "Towards Apotheosis in Florence", and "Becoming an Institution" read like the conquests of a Napoleon of Art. Commissions, unveilings and honours have very little to do with the inner life and visions of an artist, nor with fascinating gossip and emotional upsets, and it is these things that we seek almost in vain after the early chapters. The life of a man devoted almost entirely to work is very likely to be dull, of course, but his letters and conversation should not be, and yet we can sense the author's occasional stifled yawns.

As in most biographies, it is the early years that are most interesting. The account of Moore's Castleford boyhood fills me with ambivalent nostalgia for pre-television, pre-electricity, pre-washing-machine and pre-birth-control days. Women had to be made of heroic stuff to survive, and from her photograph alone we can see that Henry Moore's indefatigable mother (whom he resembled) was an immensely strong character, the source of his obsession with the Female Rock of Ages.

The young and attractive art-teacher Alice Gostick was also an early formative influence. In one of the photographs an adolescent Henry Moore can be seen sitting devotedly at her feet, gazing raptly at a pottery jug. He wrote to Miss Gostick while he was in the Army, and maintained a link until her death in 1960. This loyalty to old friends was a very pleasing side of his character.

But he didn't care for competition. Though they had known each other from the early days, Moore declined to broadcast a tribute to Barbara Hepworth when she died in 1975. From the start he hadn't wanted simply to sculpt; he wanted to be a great sculptor, and the desire to be best was one of his driving weaknesses. Roger Berthoud insists on his "genius", but it was very much of the 99% perspiration kind. Accounts of the young Henri Gaudier make Henry Moore seem very stodgy, and the book comes to life when the young Frenchman is quoted.

> "Sculptural energy is the mountain.
> Sculptural feeling is the appreciation of masses in relation.
> Sculptural ability is the defining of these masses by planes. . . .
> Plastic soul is intensity of life bursting the plane."

These words were written before World War II.

Gaudier, Brancusi, Epstein and others had been the trailblazers. Berthoud says that had Henri Gaudier lived, the history of British sculpture would have been very different; and remarks that had Henry Moore died at the same age as Gaudier, he would have achieved nothing.

When Moore reached the Royal College of Art in 1921, the alternative road had already been beaten out. (Picasso was in his forties.) It was the conventional skills of a sculptor that were taught at the College, but Leon Underwood taught drawing, and Will Rothenstein was an open-minded principal. London lay all about the young man, who spent as much time as he could with the Mexican and other primitive works in the British Museum. He also made small direct stone-carvings in his free time, mainly in the holidays. This meant that he worked twice as hard as most students, and hard work and strong convictions are of more use to a sculptor than the sparkiest of brains. Academically, Moore was "strictly average". In trying to explain his apparent insensitivity to the brutality of life in the Army, in France in 1918, Berthoud says:

> "Moore created through stone, wood and bronze. His work would have been the poorer if he had ever expressed his innermost thoughts through his pen. . . ."

He cannot bring himself to admit that it might have been the real Henry Moore that wrote:

> "For me the war passed in a romantic haze of hoping to be a hero. Sometimes in France there were three or four days of great danger when you thought there wasn't a chance of getting through, and then all one felt was sadness at having taken so much trouble for no purpose; but on the whole I enjoyed the army. . . ."

Moore fell on his feet wherever he was, and in spite of his persistent Modernism he was asked to stay on and teach at the Royal College of Art after he had graduated. He was also given a travelling scholarship. Later in life he was to comment that his time in Italy as a student was the nearest he had come to a nervous breakdown. This was partly due to unrequited love for a fellow student, Edna Ginesi, and also to the fact that he was overwhelmed by the works of the High Renaissance that he had until then repudiated in favour of more primitive work. But he could not change direction, for it was not in him to become a great modeller like Donatello, Rodin or Epstein, or as the young Gaudier might have done.

Moore was a man of one main idea: the Maternal Landscape. He was certainly no portraitist, and could never have been as various as Epstein, each of whose carvings embodies different ideas. The older man bought some of Moore's early carvings, and Moore generously acknowledged how much he, and British sculpture, owed to Epstein's courage as well as to his gifts.

> "Epstein took the brickbats, he took the insults, he faced the howls of derision with which artists since Rembrandt have learned to become familiar. As far as sculpture in this country is concerned, he took them first. We of the generation that succeeded him were spared a great deal, simp-

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> ly because his sturdy personality and determination had taken so much . . . and I believe that the sculptors who followed Epstein in this country would have been more insulted . . . had the popular fury not spent itself on him."

Nevertheless, Moore took his share of abuse during the 1930s, when he was doing his best carvings. Later, direct carving was abandoned. "Truth to material", of course, is a simplistic notion, for sculpture is not so much material as process, and a sculptural idea can be like a soul undergoing metempsychosis, being incarnated in successive materials. Idea breathes life into clay; clay responds to hands and becomes almost human; the plaster matrix turns it inside out and then back again, deadening it; then bronze restores it to shining, or patinated, life. Wood or plastic can be cast in bronze; roughs can be made in polystyrene; replicas of bronzes can be made in fibreglass resin, while the expressive (or inexpressive) form remains the same. Herein lies a temptation for sculptors. Their works can be duplicated in various sizes, and so can their fees. Even carvings can be reproduced by those marvellous Italian craftsmen and their pointing machines. The lure of multiplication tempted Henry Moore away from sculpture into big business, and thus he became "the Greatest Living Englishman".

I look at the photographs at the end of the book. Sculpture after sculpture, untouched by the artist's hand, and celebrity after celebrity, hobnobbing with the great man. Sophia Loren, "a discriminating collector", appears to impress him. His face cracks into rare laughter with Barbara Streisand, and he receives the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit from the West German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt.

In St Paul's Cathedral is a Madonna and Child of 1983, carved in travertine marble by those wonderful artisans of Henraux, outsoaping the soapiest of souvenirs and making the marble version of Rodin's *Kiss* look acceptably stony. Henry Moore at the end of his life did everything that he had cried out against at the beginning. Perhaps he began young and ignorant, and finished up old and wise. Roger Berthoud refrains from comment, but it appears to me that Moore, starting out full of energy to re-establish the carving tradition and create archetypal and timeless images, ended by making expensive street-furniture. Perhaps he was more sinned against than sinning, a victim of Art Promotions International.

Along his route towards the wrong destination he did great things. He made the early carvings, culminating in the Northampton Madonna. He made the haunting bronze figures of the 1950s. He designed the Knife Edge, and other expressive forms of the '60s. He was one of the prime movers behind the much-needed Thames and Hudson book on Giovanni Pisano, which came out in 1970. He distributed money to help students, and works to fill galleries. He stood by his early ideals in politics. He set a marvellous example by working even harder as a sculptor than his father had as a hewer of coal, and he gave to sculpture his one main idea—that the Earth and Humanity are one, and that an Earth Mother, a figure suggestive of rocks, caves, mountains, valleys and miraculous fertility, is the appropriate image for us to revere today.

His IMPASSIVE face is also to be seen on the cover of a book of photographs called *Portrait of the Artist*, by Jorge Lewinski.[2] This crash-course in recent British art could serve as a catalogue for artist-fanciers. The photographs show many of the artists at various ages, so that we can watch the ageing process if not the development of their work. Roger Hilton, skeletal in his last year, sits on the edge of his death-bed. David Hockney appears both darkish and as a bottled blond. John Piper's lean face grows handsomer with age; a vertical line runs down each cheek, from eye to chin, like a runnel for tears. Terry Frost looks cheerfully at home in the world. Frank Auerbach succeeds in being photographed in impasto, in a brown study. Josef Herman looks like a man who has come through, and achieved serenity. Barbara Hepworth looks like Baby Jane. Very few of the artists are embarrassingly pretending to think, or smiling at us, though they may be performing in other ways. The text is sympathetic and describes the habitat and habits of the artist simply and vividly, but the puritan in me objects to this preoccupation with the externals of artists' lives, for the work (and the thought, if any) is what matters.

[2] *Portrait of the Artist*. By JORGE LEWINSKI. Carcanet, £12.95.

## Cure

*(to the memory of Philip Larkin)*

For me the cure would be that she would come
to me despite the world being loveless.
My arms reach outward, upward—sun skins them,

there's only heat to hold. It's hard and dry.
One day we may discover the softness
of water's fertility, then come by

love fortuitously—if the soul
still functions. Maybe it's dried in the glare,
but with soft rain could be recovered whole.

We leave go everything and just burn up—
or burn out, early, too early. O so
early, and mostly love doesn't turn up

on cue, or have anything to do with
us at all. We pretend it does, but from
warmth it grows so cold when we learn the truth.

And if she, as cure, had come to you, would
you then have believed you were other than
deceived? No, you saw truly where you stood.

*Ivan White*

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# Books Encountered

**Reading Wordsworth.** By J. H. ALEXANDER. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £7.95.

Wordsworth's brother John, quoted here, said that "Most of William's poetry improves upon 2nd, 3rd or 4th reading". The author, Senior Lecturer in English at Aberdeen, is steeped in the subject; and his brief book is a wise, sensitive guide to Wordsworth's subtly novel use of what he calls "the meanest words". He also, however, documents the decline into prudence and pomp.

**Woodrow Wilson and the American Diplomatic Tradition: The Treaty Fight in Perspective.** By LLOYD E. AMBROSIUS. Cambridge University Press, £27.50, $34.50.

Wilson fascinated Freud, and verdicts on him have swung to and fro, most recently in work by Cooper, Ferrell, Link, Mulder, Schwabe, and Weinstein. Professor Ambrosius rejects any simple equation of Wilson with idealistic internationalism and Republicans with realism and isolationism. Both -isms, he concludes, were inadequate; and even if the US had joined the League its dilemmas would have remained.

**Malcolm Lowry: Under the Volcano.** Edited by GORDON BOWKER. Macmillan, £20.00, paper £6.95.

Good addition to the well-established "Casebooks" series, including Lowry's own Preface to the French translation of the novel; reviews by such as Jacques Barzun, Walter Allen and Philip Toynbee; and critical articles by Brian O'Kill, Malcolm Bradbury, Richard K. Cross, Stephen Spender, and others. Sceptical voices are rare.

**Romantic Affinities: Portraits from an Age, 1780-1830.** By RUPERT CHRISTIANSEN. The Bodley Head, £16.00.

A stylish amalgam of largely biographical essays on, portraits of, and critical grapplings with the major Romantics, including not only Byron, Coleridge, the Shelleys, and the Wordsworths, but also André Chénier, Goethe, Hölderlin, Hoffmann, Kleist, Pushkin, and Mme de Staël. A pleasant would-be antidote to A-level blues.

**Women and War.** By JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN. Harvester Press, £9.95.

Long, sensible, and very reasonably priced, this is basically an historical meditation which aims to subvert male-female stereotypes *vis-à-vis* war. It sets up various St Joans against "*le repos du guerrier*", somewhat undermining the "peace women" image. Unlike some feminist scholars, Professor Elshtain seeks man-woman reconciliation under the general label "chastened patriot".

**Afghanistan: Agony of a Nation.** By SANDY GALL. The Bodley Head, £12.95.

Vividly detailed account of the author's third reporting trip to the Afghan Resistance, in 1986, pointedly asking why the media have paid so little attention to it, compared with Viet Nam. As Margaret Thatcher says in her Foreword, "this book makes a valuable contribution" to understanding the war, which it by no means idealises.

**Afghanistan: The Great Game Revisited.** Edited by ROSANNE KLASS. Freedom House/University Press of America, $29.95, paper $19.95.

Valuable compendious complement to Sandy Gall's reportage, with chronology, who's who, glossaries, and authoritative essays by a dozen learned contributors. Current negotiations, writes the editor, "could be reasonably interpreted as a discussion of arrangements for the Soviet control of Afghanistan without the active use of Soviet military forces and in a manner satisfactory to international public opinion." Given the Sovietisation documented here, the prospect seems bleak.

**The Society of Mind.** By MARVIN MINSKY. Heinemann, £15.95.

In a coffee-table-sized, 339-page book full of diagrams, jokes and provocative epigrams, the co-founder of the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory at MIT explores how thinking works, hypothesising the complex cooperation of many small "agents" and processes, whose very number makes the best thinkers both tough and versatile, trying new approaches when old ones fail. Fascinating, encouraging, and useful.

**Tales from Two Cities: Travel of Another Sort.** By DERVLA MURPHY. John Murray, £12.95.

The lady who rode a bicycle from Ireland to India reports on racial problems in Bradford and Handsworth, Birmingham. Ray Honeyford she thought insensitive; but she "shared his impatient scorn for the woolly-minded wafflings of the Race Relations Industry, the bullying tactics of the Far Left and the illogical fanaticism of 'anti-racist zealots'." Her basic indictment is of ethnocentricity.

**Convergences: Essays on Art and Literature.** By OCTAVIO PAZ. Translated by HELEN LANE. Bloomsbury, £16.95.

"Quixotic" could be the word for these leisurely, learned musings on translation, culture-contact (Piaf's voice frightened pygmies), American plain cooking, eroticism, television, Dante, Mallarmé, Picasso, Latin-American poetry, the haiku, Tantrism, Breton and Miró, Sartre, Pound, Wallace Stevens. . . . Only connect!

**Elites and the Wealthy in Modern British History: Essays in Social and Economic History.** By W. D. RUBINSTEIN. Harvester Press, £29.95.

Five new and six already published essays on riches and power by a leading specialist, an anglophile American, now an Associate Professor in Australia. He confirms and elaborates his 1977 conclusion (from elaborate records analysis) that manufacturing was less, and commerce more important to Britain's 19th-century wealthy than had been thought. The book also contains a revealing essay on Dickens and R. Austin Freeman.

**Narratives of Love and Loss: Studies in Modern Children's Fiction.** By MARGARET and MICHAEL RUSTIN. Verso, £7.95, $13.95.

"The sentimental quality of the classics of the Edwardian period (Milne, Barrie, Hodgson Burnett and so on) reflects the mawkish quality of family life lived within these confines. . . ." Still, apart from side-swipes at Enid Blyton, this is a sensible, sensitive look at some favourites, including C. S. Lewis, E. B. White, and Philippa Pearce, but omitting Joan Aiken and Penelope Lively.

**Conflict and the Press.** Edited by HARVEY TYSON. Argus Printing & Publishing Company (47 Sauer Street, Johannesburg: available from P.O. Box 1014, Johannesburg 2000), £9.50 surface mail, £13.50 by air.

Proceedings of the 1987 centennial conference run by the Johannesburg *Star*, with contributions from (among others) Katharine Graham, Countess Dönhoff of *Die Zeit*, Helen Vlachos, Andreas Whittam Smith of *The Independent*, Donald Trelford of *The Observer*, Graham Leach of the BBC, and Joe Latakgomo of *The Sowetan* (subsequently censored by the Pretoria authorities). Very lively—two South African Cabinet Ministers were quizzed, and many reporters told painful tales.

**Reagan's America: Innocents at Home.** By GARY WILLS. Heinemann, £14.95.

"Nothing is more durable in Reagan than his dreams, his optimism, his religious-tinted hopes." Hostile, witty, and knowledgeable, Professor Wills (miscalled "Willis" under his dust-jacket portrait) portrays the President as a many-sided image of Americanism for fellow dreamers—fulfilling the mythic-leader role at the expense of leadership. The book's last word is "Reykjavik". May history's be "INF"?

*R.M.*

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# CONTROVERSY

# The Lingering Debate on Capital Punishment

## By E. J. Mishan

*"He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall surely be put to death."* **The Book of the Covenant (Exodus, 21)**

FOR THOSE WHO take their inspiration from the Old Testament, there can be no doubt about the appropriate treatment for murderers. Jehovah's laws were simple and direct. In addition to the above commandment, *The Book of the Covenant* also lays it down that ". . . thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe". And if by modern standards such injunctions to even-handed retribution are judged to be harsh, they seem eminently civilised when they are compared with the criminal code of Britain in the early 19th century, a time when a man could be hanged for stealing no more than a pocket handkerchief.

The overwhelming majority of the British public still tends to favour a rather "hard-line" approach to crime, particularly for crimes of murder. This broad consensus does not, however, extend to the more vocal members of the Establishment. Among politicians, journalists, lawyers, clergy, magistrates, police officers, bureaucrats, and social scientists, opinion is deeply divided. Parliamentary opinion itself is divided, although on the question of capital punishment the "soft line" has been predominant. Thus, a reading of official and unofficial reports, of monographs and journal papers, of Parliamentary speeches, of newspaper articles and of the correspondence columns on this agonising question of capital punishment over the last 30 years bears eloquent testimony to the decline of the middle-class consensus. Certainly, no other issue over the last few years can have produced in the Houses of Parliament (and in the columns of *The Times*) so fascinating a farrago of arguments, both weighty and trivial, ingenious and disingenuous, to say nothing of the absurd or vacuous. One wonders at the state of mind which can reach the conclusion that "the real answer to violence is deterrence".

Many of the Members of Parliament committed to opposing the "hard line" on crime evidently see themselves as the torch-bearers of progress, inheritors of the humanist traditions of the 19th century, and persist in the belief that the real causes of crime are to be found in poverty and ignorance. Such a belief may be associated with an idealism that springs from teleological faith in the beckoning future of brotherhood and light—a belief which paralyses thought and perception, and against which reason and evidence can make no headway.

For all that, decisions have to be taken by the community even during times of conflicting opinions and divided counsels. In the event, and following a free vote in Parliament, capital punishment in Britain was abolished by the Act of 1969. True, Mrs Thatcher sought to reintroduce the death penalty in 1983 for the more outrageous kinds of murder. But, on a free vote, the Bill was defeated.

In fact this question of capital punishment has been debated in the Commons a total of thirteen times since the introduction of the trial period of abolition in 1965. Of these, seven were more general debates involving the principle of capital punishment. The remaining six arose from Private Members' Bills proposing the death penalty for particular kinds of murder, the last of such bills being that introduced by Geoffrey Dickens in January 1987 for child murder. The dates of these more general debates since the full debate in December 1969 are as follows: December 1974, December

THIS ANALYSIS *of the "lingering controversy" over capital punishment is, to be sure, itself controversial. It will be discussed, pro et contra, in subsequent issues.*

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1975, July 1979, May 1982, July 1983, and most recently April 1987, when Sir Ian Percival made the tactical error of demanding the death penalty for "evil" murder.

The outcome of the Parliamentary debates of 1969 and 1987 provides one more instance of a profound difference of opinion between the British public and their legislators.[1] Opinion polls revealed that more than 80% of the population favoured retention of the death penalty, at least for certain categories of murder. Not surprisingly, this embarrassing dichotomy was interpreted by abolitionists as indicating that the considered judgment of Parliament was, once again, "in advance of that of the country at large".

## 1. Since the 1957 Act

THE CRITICAL STEP toward total abolition began with the 1957 Act in which capital punishment was restricted to five categories of murder, including murder in the course of theft or of arrest by a police or prison officer. It is puzzling to discover that sexual murders, even of children, were excluded, and that an amendment to include deliberate and premeditated murder by poison was defeated.

It was often alleged that this 1957 Act was difficult to administer—which is, perhaps, another way of saying that it was felt to be unsatisfactory by some of those who were called upon to administer it. Certainly, after 1957, pleas of "diminished responsibility" became increasingly successful in commuting the death sentence to life imprisonment. Indeed, "the more vile the nature of the killing . . . the more chance the offender had of persuading the court that he was mentally deranged".[2] In consequence, only four persons were sentenced to death during the eight years following the 1957 Act; and all four were reprieved.

In 1965 Parliament agreed to total abolition for a trial period of five years. Before the expiration of this period, however (on 17 December 1969), the death penalty was wholly abolished on a free vote introduced by the Labour Government, after a debate in which James Callaghan, then Home Secretary, spoke powerfully for abolition. Critics of the Labour Party were so unkind as to accuse the Government of putting the issue to a vote as early as possible after it took office, in order to give the electorate enough time to forget the blatant disregard of its wishes. In defiance of public disapproval, the 1969 law continues unamended to this day.

A variety of factors is invoked by the debate on capital punishment which, within Parliament and within the country at large, waxed and waned during a period of over two decades, growing hottest in the two decisive years 1969 and 1983. Arguments for and against abolition were of varying quality: they covered the gamut from the weighty and reflective to the uninhibitedly fanciful. Although a cynic may be tempted to resort to cliché in describing the debate as generating more heat than light, the arguments and the rhetoric employed are worth recording because they afford a conspectus of contemporary thought and sentiment for future historians.

The more persuasive arguments are also worth reassessing, for the debate may not be supposed to have been concluded.

Admittedly the abolitionists in Parliament have always carried the day. But such a victory can hardly be decisive in a democracy in which the overwhelming majority of the electorate continues adamantly to favour a restoration of the death penalty. Reinforcing this belief is the contention to be elaborated in the following pages, that the case for the abolition of the death penalty—at least, as it has been presented by its best advocates—is far from being impressive, much less conclusive.

## 2. Victim or Criminal?

IT WOULD BE pointless to quote from and comment upon all the parliamentary debates since both the arguments and the rhetoric tended to repeat themselves in each of the sessions. An adequate impression of the conflicting opinions presented in Parliament and in the press can be conveyed by concentrating on the two more critical years, 1969 and 1983, plus some brief observations on the latest Commons debate of April 1987.

An informal chronological account of the debates would make entertaining reading, but it might easily leave the reader—exposed to allegation and counter-allegation, to evidence and counter-evidence—in a rather dazed and tired condition, his mind echoing with snatches of oratory. Since it is one of the purposes of this article to encourage people to think again and to think more closely about the implications of capital punishment, it is worth contriving some rudimentary conceptual structure about which may be appended the range of considerations that are brought to bear upon this embattled issue.

For a start, the considerations invoked could be sorted out into two broad categories, one labelled "ethics", the other "pragmatics". The former includes *inter alia* the notion of punishment conceived solely as retribution. The latter category includes the controversial but crucial judgment of fact: whether punishment—and, in particular, capital punishment—significantly deters crime.

Within each of these categories, my aim is to arrange the variety of factors and allegations in ascending order of persuasiveness.

Attending first chiefly to matters that come within the "ethics" category, we may begin with a glance at allegations that are more rhetorical than substantive. Yet appearing as they do with frequency, and presumably exercising some in-

[1] Other instances since World War II include the supersession of the British system of weights and measures by the metric system, mass immigration of coloured people into Britain, and taking the country into the EEC. On the first two issues there was no Parliamentary debate, not even a pretence of consulting opinion in the country.

Some brief and derogatory observations on each of these critical policy decisions will be found toward the close of my article "The New Inflation", ENCOUNTER, May 1974.

[2] This sentence is taken from p. 4 of *Criminal Homicide*, a Report of the Homicide Research Project of the Department of Sociology, Bedford College (1969).

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fluence by their emotional appeal, they cannot wholly be ignored.

For instance the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Runcie, assures us (*The Times*, 11 July 1983) that to give the state "a right to take life as part of the judicial process is to give it powers that are too God-like". About the time of the earlier debate, other Churchmen pushed this sort of deprecation further, averring that "on a Christian view" the state had no right to take life. According to the Bishop of Exeter, the death penalty was "degrading and corrupts society", whereas in the opinion of the then Bishop of Durham it was "negative, incoherent, and devoid of creative possibility" (*The Times*, 18 December 1969).

It is hard to repress the observation that—if the sanctity of the criminal's life is indeed a Christian view, and therefore at variance with the injunctions of the Old Testament—it is a pity that it was not discovered and promulgated earlier, say at the turn of the 18th century, when people were being hanged for nothing more than petty theft. True, the Anglican Church does not claim to speak with one voice: some of its senior prelates are much too busy with the things of this world to keep tabs on the eternal verities. Yet how many prominent Churchmen have there been directing their energies into channelling Church funds to African "liberation fighters", the conventional euphemism for terrorist organisations?

But Churchmen have no monopoly when it comes to *avant-garde* follies. When we turn to the laity there is a case for beginning with James Callaghan, who was Home Secretary in the Labour Government when he denied the traditional right of the state to cause the death of a citizen as a punishment for murder, adding that it lowered "the moral standing of the whole country". When society sentenced a murderer to death it was "acting on the same level as the murderers" (*The Times*, 17 December 1969).

Among his many supporters at the time were Lord Byers and Lord Eccles. The former discovered that he could not "reconcile the killing of a human life, even by the state" with his belief in the sanctity of human life. Lord Eccles spoke of a "divine spark" in everyone which it was "utterly wrong to extinguish". Mention should also be made of Lord Gordon who, bypassing the transcendental, restricted himself to the aphoristic: "Hideous penalties produce hideous social consequences" (*The Times*, 19 December 1969).

If I were permitted to choose only one example from the Commons, I should give the palm to Mr Denis Coe (Labour) who exhorted us to build a Christian society, "which means the state must not bring about judicial murders". I cannot help wondering if Mr Coe would object to extending this terminological licence to imprisonment, so equating it to "judicial slavery", or extending it even to law-enforcement generally, which he might conceive as "judicial repression".

There were not wanting those on the other side of the debate, however, to remind us that killing unlawfully strikes at the very root of the social contract[3] and that the sanctity of human life is a notion that may reasonably be extended also to the life of the murderer's victim. Going over to the attack, Sir Richard Glyn (Conservative) stated, presumably with some statistic in mind, that it was not acceptable to any Christian country to forfeit 50 innocent lives as a price for failing to execute 10 convicted murderers (*The Times*, 17 December 1969).

Now, the average number of victims (simultaneous or sequential) per murderer is difficult to determine, even for skilled investigators. But recognition of such a datum does draw attention to the unwarranted tacit assumption of abolitionists that a convicted murderer, either when in prison or released from prison, does not commit additional murders. Only when the convicted murderer is executed can it be certain that he will commit no further murders. The question the abolitionist has to face is: if executing a convicted criminal is held to be a barbaric act, is it not also a barbaric act to make possible the sacrifice of additional lives in order to save the life of the murderer?

To push this holier-than-thou attitude of abolitionists in another direction, let us agree that if capital punishment is deemed repugnant to a civilised society, proposals to reintroduce corporal punishment for crimes of physical abuse, including rape, would be regarded as no less repugnant. Yet if one is concerned primarily with civilised consequences rather than with civilised gestures, it would be difficult to justify one's repugnance. It would be difficult, that is, to argue convincingly that this kind of retributive punishment must,

## *American Polls*

*New York City*

A Media General-*Associated Press poll indicates that 86% of Americans support the death penalty for murder, and nearly half think executions are appropriate for other crimes as well.*

*Only 11% of Americans oppose the death penalty, and 3% are unsure, according to the nationwide telephone poll of 1,251 adults.*

*20% of blacks supported executions in all murder cases, compared with 30% for whites. One-third of blacks said there should be no death penalty, compared with 9% of whites.*

*56% of all those who supported the death penalty think it should be used only in such cases as brutal murders or the murders of children, and 30% think it should be used in all murder cases.*

*47% think the death penalty should be used for crimes other than murder. Slightly more than half of them said it should be imposed in rape cases, about one-third cited child molestation or abuse, 20% said treason, and 14% said drug dealing.*

Half the respondents **thought the death penalty was imposed unfairly from case to case, yet most nonetheless supported executions. Even among those who believed it is inequitable, 83% approved of it.**

**The poll's results are subject to an error margin of 3 percentage points.**

International Herald Tribune

[3] *Criminal Homicide*, p. 3.

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if countenanced, tend to brutalise society. And this for the simple reason that since the 1950s the world has, in any case, become a far more brutal place: the risk of physical violence in our towns and cities has grown at an alarming pace. Moreover, during the last three decades, depiction on the big screen, and on the little, of repeated scenes of sadistic violence has gone far to desensitise the public. It is not impossible that our simon-pure abolitionist, having himself been exposed so long to these more licentious aspects of "the new permissiveness", is just not able to feel, or to feel deeply, much sense of moral outrage on reading accounts of innocent citizens being clubbed, disfigured, or slain.

## 3. The Abolitionist's Trump Card

AN ARGUMENT that contributes strongly in bringing down the balance of opinion in favour of abolition is that the death penalty is irreversible. Should a verdict of guilty send a man to his death, a belated discovery of his innocence can never restore him to life. True, wrongful imprisonment can also be a tragedy. By the time Captain Dreyfus was judged to be innocent, he was all but broken in health. None the less, death is irrevocable, and recognition of its irrevocability continues to be one of the strong points in the abolitionist's case.

The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) produced a paper in 1983 alleging that, in the thirteen years prior to the abolition of the death penalty in 1965, "serious doubts" about the guilt of convicted murderers had been raised in at least three cases. They included that of Timothy Evans, who was hanged on a charge of multiple murder and was later granted a posthumous pardon.

Nevertheless, as Lord Denham pointed out (*The Times*, 13 July 1983), the possibility of wrongful execution is remote. Apart from Timothy Evans, there were really no other cases of a similar miscarriage of justice. Such cases are most unlikely, Lord Denham added, because a far nearer approach to certainty is looked for in a trial when the penalty is death than when it is life imprisonment.[4] Indeed, the other two convicted murderers mentioned in the NACRO Report, who were imprisoned and later released, would not (in Lord Denham's opinion) have been found "guilty beyond reasonable doubt" had the penalty for murder been execution.

One telling implication of Lord Denham's reminder is that, over time, a number of innocent men will be sentenced to life imprisonment who would have been acquitted of the charge of murder if the death penalty had been restored—a consideration which acts to tilt the balance of opinion in the other direction.

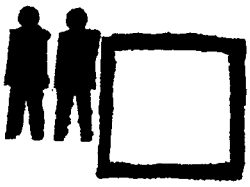
Even if there were evidence showing that over a longish period a number of innocent persons had in fact been wrongly executed, or might well be executed in the future if the death penalty were restored, this argument for abolition might still not be decisive. On a utilitarian view, for instance, as Ernest van den Haag has reminded us,[5] an occasional miscarriage of justice is to be expected; no system devised by man is wholly foolproof. A determination, therefore, to avoid any conceivable miscarriage of justice for the accused could produce a profound miscarriage of justice in that the number of innocent lives lost (the victims of wrongly-acquitted murderers) could far exceed the number of innocent lives saved (wrongly-convicted murderers).

Remaining within this first category turning on ethics, another factor that tended to sway opinion toward abolition was the frequency of "crimes of passion". According to the Bedford College Report of 1969, about two-thirds of reported murders take place in the home. Between 1957 and 1968, 50% of those indicted for murder had "personal relations" with their victims.[6] In such cases the plea of the killer is generally that he acted "under provocation"; if the plea is successful, the charge becomes that of manslaughter rather than that of murder.

Most people, we may safely suppose, would rank "cold-blooded" murder as a more heinous crime than "hot-

### *Canada Debates*

*Ottawa*



A LONG-AWAITED **debate on capital punishment got under way in the Canadian House of Commons yesterday. The highly emotional debate is on a Government motion, introduced in February [1987], which would restore capital punishment in principle, while leaving a parliamentary committee to decide which crimes would merit the death penalty and the means of execution. Canada used hanging before the abolition of capital punishment in 1976.**

**The motion, the Government promised, will be decided on a free vote—that is, MPs will be able to vote according to conscience without being subject to party discipline. It favours the supreme penalty for premeditated murder and killings of policemen and prison guards.**

IT WILL PROBABLY *take at least a year before the measure goes through all legislative stages, and the ultimate outcome is difficult to predict. While most Liberal MPs and the entire New Democratic Party caucus oppose capital punishment, about 70% of Tory MPs—apparently reflecting the views of most Canadians—are believed to favour it. Mr Brian Mulroney, the Prime Minister, opposes restoration.*

THE TIMES (*London*)

[4] In support of this contention, Alex Carlile, QC, MP, speaking in the Commons debate of April 1987, emphasised the extreme difficulty of obtaining a verdict of guilty during the years when capital punishment was the penalty for murder—an observation which casts doubts upon the allegation made by the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, and others that the verdicts of guilty (which were being reviewed in the light of new evidence) in connection with the Birmingham pub-bombing would have resulted in the death penalty.

Since a murder trial is that much more searching when the penalty is death, the greater "benefit of doubt" enjoyed by the accused may be thought to reduce the deterrence to murder. Yet consideration of this benefit is unlikely to offset the greater fear that is excited by the death penalty.

[5] Ernest van den Haag, *Punishing Criminals* (1975).

[6] The Report also makes the interesting point—though without adducing evidence—that the victim of homicide is seldom inactive in the events leading to his murder.

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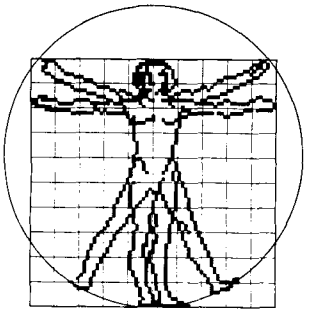
blooded" murder, which includes murder—whether intentional or not—under provocation. Yet reference to crimes of passion in the debates was something of a red herring. For the motion being deliberated was not that of restoring the death penalty for all categories of murder, but that of retaining or restoring it for the particular categories of murder indicated in the 1957 Act; and these categories did not in fact include crimes of passion.

These observations notwithstanding, any impression that the charge of murder ought to be reduced to that of manslaughter when the killer acts under provocation is unwarranted. Although the person who murders another in a fury of passion inspires less horror than one motivated by the prospect of gain, it does not follow that execution of the former is morally unjustified.

## 4. *Nature or Nurture?*



ANY CONSCIENTIOUS investigation into the causes of crime cannot avoid the nature-nurture debate and, since both may contribute to criminal behaviour, the question of which is the dominant factor.

The more popular belief has always been that the chief causes of crime are to be traced to nurture—to the social and economic environment. Common to the 18th-century Enlightenment and to the great liberal reform movement of the 19th century was the conviction that poverty and ignorance were the prime causes of crime. It is a view still current in liberal and socialist circles. Yet it is too simplistic by far to serve as a working hypothesis. Over the past 40 years an unprecedented growth in crime, especially crimes of violence, has been accompanied in the West by an equally unprecedented growth in living standards and in the spread of education.

There is, on the other hand, no shortage of specific explanations of rising crime rates, and although the accuracy of the relevant coefficients may be disputed, few would challenge the influence, say, of parental behaviour or of urban-area population densities on the incidence of crime. But just how much more must we know about the causes of crime, at least the environmental causes, before existing trends can be reversed?

According to some writers, effective methods of combating crime should wait upon an analysis of the causes of crime. Thus, Robert Jackson in an article in *The Times* (10 December 1969) doubted that the trends in crime could be arrested until successful research had revealed the relationship between crime and such environmental factors as poverty, poor housing, television, mobility, and the decline in family life and religion.

It may well be that the factors mentioned by Jackson have operated over the last 30 years or so to increase crime. Yet just how a precise knowledge of the contribution to crime of each of the factors mentioned—say, its estimated coefficient of correlation in some general equation—can be of much use in arresting or reversing trends in crime is far from obvious. We might be able to do something about poor housing over time if this were shown to be a really significant factor, which is doubtful. But there is not a lot one can do in a free society about the decline in religion and family life; even less about the related advance in science and the growth of affluence, much of the latter channelled into television, travel, and hedonistic pursuits.

Such facts, however, need not cause us to sigh in resignation. It is not at all necessary to have to operate on the *causes* of crime, or indeed of any social phenomenon, in order to influence its direction. It is common knowledge among scientists that there can be remedies even when there is no idea of the causes. It is entirely possible, surely, to determine the efficacy of any proposed deterrent to crime in particular contexts without recourse to dependable knowledge of the secular causes of the fivefold increase in crime since the 1950s.

The alternative possibility—that criminal behaviour is physiologically or genetically determined—is clearly far more disturbing than any environmental explanation. Obviously, the distinction between nature and nurture cannot be clearly drawn. There are cases, for example, in which a particular form of brain abnormality, one held to be a factor in criminal behaviour, may be said to be induced by environmental factors.

According to a recent report, Dr Rick Howard of Queen's University, Belfast, having studied the brain-wave patterns of a group of Broadmoor Hospital patients, found a characteristic that is indicative of "low cortical arousal", or depressed brain activity, of the sort commonly found in persons known to have suffered perinatal trauma. In so far as such trauma may result from maternal infection or alcoholism, the cause is broadly speaking environmental, the obvious remedy being to educate mothers-to-be. In contrast, genetic factors such as those allegedly discovered by the American scientist Dr Sarnoff Mednick would hardly be amenable to simple treatment. After studying a sample of the population of adopted children in Denmark, Dr Mednick's findings seemed to show that "whatever the upbringing of an adopted child, it still tended to follow the criminal patterns of the biological, not adoptive, parents".[7]

Should the scientific community ever conclude that criminal behaviour is predominantly the consequence of biological predisposition, whether or not genetically transmitted, effective crime prevention would require nothing less than the scanning of each individual's brain, or other relevant part of the neural system, at an early age, and close monitoring thereafter of crime-prone individuals. Certainly if such a belief became widely accepted, large organisations would insist on vetting all their personnel.

There would, however, be enormous resistance to the

[7] Quoted by Peter Evans in his article, "Inside the Criminal Brain", *The Listener*, 24 July 1986.

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acceptance of a view so repugnant to society. Although we are ready enough to agree that a person can be influenced by the example and persuasion of others, or even by the weather, we hold tenaciously to the belief that we are free and responsible beings: that the choices we make are, in the last resort, the product of our free will. Indeed, to believe otherwise is humiliating for the individual and demoralising for society.

Until such time, therefore, as there is a consensus that crime is to be attributed in the main to innate and irremediable biological propensities,[8] we are bound to put the emphasis on environmental factors. We are to continue, that is, in our habitual belief that although the individual is subject to influences and constraints, his behaviour is never the outcome wholly of forces beyond his control. Individual choice is to be treated as a reality, not an illusion.

## 5. *Crime Conceived as a Form of Insanity*

WHENEVER A MAN kills another (incited by rage, jealousy, or vengeance), it may well be alleged that he was acting when "the balance of his mind was disturbed". This phrase, however, neatly circumvents a relevant consideration: namely, the exertion made by the individual either to restrain or to fuel his passions. Many do take measures to fuel their passions, for instance by imbibing alcohol or other drugs. There is a temptation in these circumstances to declare that alcohol and other drugs are among the causes of crime. A more guarded statement would have it that the ubiquity or availability of drugs is a precondition of the perpetration of crimes committed under their influence and that stricter controls on their availability or consumption would tend to reduce this kind of crime.

Newspaper headlines such as "DOPE-PUSHERS CAUSE OF RIOTS", in the wake of the acts of criminal hooliganism in Handsworth, in September 1985, can be literally true only if the "dope-pushers" used physical violence to inject the stuff into unwilling victims—which, of course, was not being alleged. In the circumstances, it was abundantly clear that some of those bent on mischief, and some of those who later became involved in attacks on the police, freely chose to take "dope" in order to revel in its "liberating" effects. Familiar as they already were with its power to help them lose self-control, and aware therefore of the increased likelihood of their committing crimes of violence, they can be held no less responsible for their crimes than if these were committed when they were perfectly sober.

Adherence to this formula about "the balance of mind" impels one toward conceiving crime, or at least crimes of violence, as a manifestation of insanity. In its extreme form, all crime is held to be evidence of mental derangement and therefore deserving of nothing but sympathy and therapy. This assertion cannot be disproved by reference to independent tests of insanity or mental disease, since it is treated by its defenders as a tautology. According to their conception of things, a sane or normal man is one who, by definition, does not commit crimes. *Ergo*: if a man does commit a crime, he cannot be sane or normal. Indeed, it follows from this view of the matter that the more egregious the crime, the greater must be the degree of insanity and the more pressing, therefore, the need for therapy.

The conviction that crime is chiefly, or wholly, a curable form of mental sickness is comforting to the simple soul. In a world where crimes of violence have become rampant, insistence on picturing the criminal thug as a deranged fellow-being, badly in need of understanding and care, can activate a flow of sympathy and paternalism that makes it possible for him to sublimate fear. It also bypasses the troublesome question of gradation of punishment according to the crime committed, since, if the criminal is conceived as the hapless victim of forces beyond his control, the only relevant question in his treatment is the appropriate form of therapy. Hospitals are required, not prisons.

## 6. *The Death-Cell Experience*

IN ANY APPRAISAL of the justness of the death sentence for the crime of murder there is, finally, the question of the degree of suffering experienced by the convicted murderer prior to his execution.

Dostoevsky makes much of this suffering. He compares the unexpected and relatively swift death of the victim with the mounting terror which possesses the condemned man as his day of doom draws closer. Dostoevsky's intensity, however, warps his vision and narrows it. He might, for example, have extended his reflections on the subject to cover the disgrace and suffering of the murderer's family. But any effort to widen his sympathies would have weakened his case, for the suffering of the family of the murderer's victims can hardly be supposed to be any less than that of the family of the murderer. The call for retribution is not without purpose. Admittedly, the grief endured in consequence of the loss of a husband, father, brother, or child is not quelled by the execution of his assassin. But it does have some cathartic effect in muting the anguish and the hatred of the victim's family.

Whatever one's opinion about the distribution of pain and suffering between the parties concerned, the implicit premise in Dostoevsky's argument is unacceptable. Why should it matter, if it were indeed the case, that the condemned

[8] Evidence of brain abnormalities among the criminally inclined does not of itself militate against environmental explanations. In the first place, the sort of brain-damage associated with criminal behaviour may be attributable directly to increased amounts of lead or other substances (such as radioactive or other gases) in the atmosphere.

In the second place, unless one holds to the old dichotomy between mind and brain, the developing character of a man (over which, as a free agent, he has some control), in response to social and other factors, must also have a neural dimension even if we are at present unable to trace the links.

If, therefore, we are able eventually to detect criminal characteristics in the individual's neural system, it may *not* be assumed that these occur anterior to and independently of environmental factors or of the individual's responses over time to his changing environment.

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murderer suffers more than his victim? The criminal is not being punished only for causing his victim to suffer; he is being punished for taking life.

The degree of suffering of the condemned murderer is, of course, not irrelevant in any system of justice, but two facts tell against undue dramatisation of the death-cell ordeal. First, the practice in Britain has always been to keep delays of execution to a minimum. Appeals were generally dealt with as soon as possible. Condemned murderers, if not reprieved, were usually hanged within two or three weeks of conviction.

Secondly, according to the Bedford College Report, evidence given by the prison authorities supports the view that those condemned to death tended on the whole to accept their fate philosphically. It was observed that they slept well, ate well, and generally put on weight. The explanation, according to the Report, resides in the fact that hopes of remission in such circumstances make for strain and torment whereas despair of remission produces resignation. Only when hope is kept alive does the tension grow.[9]

## 7. *Rehabilitation vs. Punishment*

LET US NOW TURN from questions of ethics to more pragmatic considerations, especially those bearing on the social consequences of the death penalty. Opinions about such consequences were very much to the fore in the Parliamentary debates of 1969 and 1983.

An unsympathetic judgment of the pro-Abolition speeches would be that they smacked too strongly of complacency. Even the more pertinent contributions to the debates were far from being conclusive. As for the less pertinent, of which there was no shortage, they included a number of implausible conjectures. There was, for instance, allusion to the "unwholesome effects" of capital punishment on unstable minds as a result of which crime might increase. Again, it was solemnly affirmed that hanging was "harmful to the hangman" (though, presumably, not quite so harmful as it was to the prisoner). And inevitably there were stunningly unconvincing perorations about the coarsening and corrupting effects of capital punishment on the public—capped by Baroness Birk's ingenuous assurance that "there could be no more effective means of adding violence to society" (*The Times*, 18 December 1969). By way of variation, the practical difficulties of implementing the 1957 Act, with its five categories of capital murder, were given an airing from time to time, as though that particular Act was the only conceivable alternative to total abolition.

Finally, there was the question of rehabilitation of the criminal, a question that can always be counted on to blur the issue. For the idea of punishment either as retributive justice or as a means of deterrent appears to conflict with the notion of the criminal as one in need of proper treatment if he is to realise his "potential" as a useful member of society.

Surprisingly enough, emphasis on the latter purpose of a prison came from a prison governor who went so far as to insist that the primary function of a prison was to rehabilitate prisoners. This view was echoed by a prison instructor, who—possibly carried away by vocational enthusiasm—added that a number of prisoners who might have been executed before Abolition were "now back in society . . . mellow, matured, and useful citizens". To top it all, Labour's Tom Driberg (as he then was) confided to the House of Commons that he had personally come to know a murderer who at that very time was a reformed character, married, working happily, and supporting a family.

Such accounts, allowing for some exaggeration, are plausible enough. I can well believe that if an arch-villain as ruthless as Himmler were exposed to intensive therapy, he might eventually become a reformed character and end his days as a benefactor raising funds for concentration-camp orphans. We need not doubt the value of research into new methods of rehabilitating even the most grisly killers. Yet unless we adopt strict priorities in dealing with malefactors we shall continue to be afflicted by misgivings. It is imperative, then, to rank the chief factors bearing on the treatment of criminals on a "lexicographic scale". In all cases of conflict, therefore, I personally propose ranking considerations of retributive justice before those of protecting society, the latter in turn taking precedence over concern for rehabilitation. The broad conclusions of this essay, however, will probably be just as acceptable—or otherwise—to a reader who reverses my proposed ranking of the first two factors and, instead, places the protection of society before retributive justice.

## 8. *The Police View*

BEFORE summarising other opinions about the "deterrent effect" of the death penalty, and before assessing the evidence, let us give some thought to the effect of Abolition on the security of the police. As they are in the immediate firing-line in the war on crime, their opinions deserve close attention. The reaction of police officers either to the fact or to their belief that, in consequence of the abolition of the death penalty, they are subject to greater risk of physical injury is bound to be an important factor in the standard of over-all protection that their vigilance confers on society.

Their reaction has been quite unambivalent. The police in

[9] These observations are consistent with reports about the horrors of prison cells such as "Death Row" in the state of Virginia, where condemned men may be kept for years, their mood alternating between hope and terror, before they are taken to the electric chair. The atmosphere of the place is well described by Ann Leslie in "The Edge of Life", *Daily Mail*, 3 June 1986. It is also evoked by a recent (though occasionally naive) report produced by Amnesty International, *USA: The Death Penalty* (February 1987), which, if accepted at face value, amounts more to condemnation of the American system of justice than of the death penalty *per se*.

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Britain have always been emphatic in their opposition to proposals to abolish the death penalty for murder, and particularly so for the murder of a police officer in the course of his duty. The Prison Officers Association concurs with this view and is strongly against abolition of the death penalty for the murder of a prison officer, since officers are then, they believe, exposed to greater danger from criminals already serving a life sentence for murder. In the debates of 1983, the Secretary of the Police Federation went so far as to write a letter to each and every Member of Parliament, urging them to vote for the restoration of the death penalty; and he gave figures showing the growth in the number of policemen murdered since the Act of Abolition of 1965.

Again, during the earlier debate of 1969, a letter appeared in *The Times* (18 December 1969) from the Chief Inspector of the Essex Constabulary, in which he pointed out that over the space of a few years ammonia sprays and sawn-off shotguns had been added by British criminals to their hitherto limited armoury of coshes and pick-shafts. The current use of firearms by the "upper, rational, calculating and bolder ranks of the criminal community", he remarked, "showed ominous signs of spreading among the more impetuous thugs". Should trends continue, he warned—and there are no strong reasons for doubting that they will—the police would have to be armed. Abolitionists would then have to recognise that lawful homicide had become a possible police response to armed criminals, and that one form of legal execution had been changed for another.

THE POLICE VIEW that the abolition of capital punishment exposes its members to greater risk of bodily harm found much support in both Houses of Parliament. Several speakers agreed that the increase in the number of murders committed since Abolition was significant, the more so when murders of passion were deducted from the total. According to Dick Taverne (Labour, Hammersmith), only a year after the 1965 Act three policemen had been brutally murdered in his constituency. Speaking on the same day (17 December 1969), a Conservative member, Eldon Griffiths, told of the "frightening increases" in both the number of firearms used by criminals and the number of attacks on the police since 1965, an impression incidentally confirmed by Mark Woodnutt (Conservative), who spoke of "a dramatic increase" since 1965 in the number of attacks on police in Parkhurst Prison.

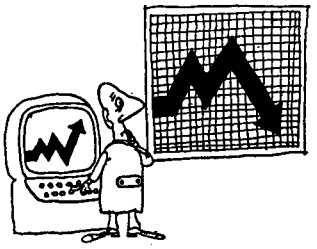
A magisterial article in *The Times* (15 December 1969) had already stated the obvious: that the rise in the number of murders in pursuit of crime since 1965 could not of itself be regarded as proof that the suspension of the death penalty was the cause. Yet it did concede the point that a readiness of the criminal to murder in emergencies would, in the absence of the death penalty, improve his chances of escape without changing the nature of his punishment if he were captured. It was a point taken up in the Commons by Quintin Hogg (17 December 1969), who roundly condemned the 1965 Act for putting "a premium on killing". As he saw it, if a criminal was set on a course that could attract a penalty of seven years imprisonment or more, there would arise occasions when "only one pair of eyes and hands stand between the criminal and his complete liberty". In such circumstances, he would have everything to gain and very little to lose by shooting the policeman.

A palpable hit had been scored, and the opposition was reduced to doggedly repudiating the causal significance attributed to the growth in the number of police murders. It would have occurred, some abolitionists argued, even if the death penalty had been retained, since crime in general had been growing for some time. But this explanation of the increase in police murder as an outcome of the general increase in crime was not very convincing in the particular circumstances. Nor is it very satisfactory now, since, whether true or not, it raises the major question about a general increase in crime. The explanation implied by Quintin Hogg's argument, that its cause was the milder punishment meted out to criminals, may be anathema to abolitionists—but this is no reason for not taking it seriously.

Irrespective of the crime indices and their interpretation, however, are the direct consequences on society of the beliefs that are held by policemen themselves. As expounded recently (1987) by Sir Eldon Griffiths when speaking on behalf of the Police Federation, before abolition in 1965 the police believed that they were in effect "protected by the invisible armour plate of capital punishment". Since then, however, they had become, understandably, more hesitant to risk their lives to arrest armed criminals. This confession, though candid, was hardly necessary. What other response could one expect? Whatever else it does, then, abolition certainly deters the police, and as a corollary, therefore, encourages the armed criminal.

Such encouragement comes also from warnings of abolitionists in the 1987 Commons debate to the effect that, if the death penalty were restored, judges and juries would not dare to find a convicted terrorist guilty for fear of terrorist reprisals. The mere articulation by legislators of so spineless an argument represents a victory for terrorists. The assurance that no matter what they do to others they themselves can never be lawfully executed because, among other considerations, law-abiding citizens will be just too scared to condemn them to execution, may be counted upon to strengthen their morale.

## 9. *Deterrence: The Debate in the Country*



THE DETERRENT EFFECT of capital punishment was much to the fore in the debates. Indeed, it was treated by many members of both Houses as the crucial issue. Several speakers stated that their vote one way or the other depended largely or entirely on evidence (if it could be provided) about the efficacy of capital punishment as a deterrent to murder. Not that any figures indicative of the deterrent effect of capital punishment were quoted during the Parliamentary debates.

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On this critical question, debate in both Houses amounted to no more than an exchange of convictions; but it was fascinating for all that.

Quintin Hogg (Lord Hailsham) assumed that the increase in the total number of murders following the 1965 Act should be attributed largely to the activities of the professional criminal. This belief was borne out by Duncan Sandys's statement that the suspension of the death penalty had radically altered criminal behaviour. In the four years to 1965, he said, there had been 78 murders. In the subsequent four years there were 177 murders.[10]

The chief spokesmen for the retention of the death penalty were apparently unimpressed by the opinion of The Royal Commission on Capital Punishment of 1953, that there was:

> ". . . some evidence that abolition may be followed for a short time by an increase in homicide . . . but it would appear that as soon as the country had become accustomed to the new form of the extreme penalty abolition will not in the long run lead to an increase in crime. . . ."[11]

Duncan Sandys was far more impressed by a letter he had received from a prisoner who wrote that hanging was the sentence that criminals feared most. The point has been made by other MPs on different occasions and most recently by Ivan Lawrence, Q.C., who stated in the April 1987 Commons debate that he had been told many times by men of violence that the rope was what they feared above all.

Although the wishes of the electorate had little influence on the deliberations of the legislature, Lord Lomax, in a letter to *The Times* (15 December 1969), stated that "the public rightly believes the death penalty does deter". On the other hand, Lord Alwyn (18 December) interpreted the public's overwhelming desire to retain the death penalty as arising not so much from a belief in its deterrent value as from its providing "an element of retributive justice".

Among the abolitionists, William Hamilton gave it as his opinion that hanging was no deterrent to those who were insane or drunk, nor to enraged parents or lovers—an opinion which would seem to entail a concession regarding its deterrent effect on *other* categories of murder.

Leo Abse was quite certain that capital punishment was no deterrent. It was a mistake, he assured retentionists (17 December 1969), to believe that murderers had the same instincts as the man-in-the-street. Nor, according to Robert Jackson's article, do murderers reason as ordinary men do: "The rational criminal who eschews murder because he may be hanged is a figment." Notwithstanding this, Jackson does appear to attribute rationality to the criminal since he goes on to say that the criminal "would realise that even if he commits murder his chances of being hanged are very low".

I end these three specimens of pro-Abolition opinion with one that is seemingly more weighty. On 15 December 1969 a letter appeared in *The Times* signed by the eminent criminologist Professor Leon Radzinowicz, along with 30 other names, which stated boldly that nowhere was there "conclusive evidence" that the death penalty has any "special deterrent value"; that murder is a function of "complex social and psychological factors"; and that a return to the anomalies of the 1957 Act would be unfortunate.[12]

Such a letter to *The Times* signed by 31 "experts" might, as the mature product of research, experience, and reflection, be supposed to have had some influence on the opinions of legislators and a wider public. But while a return to "the anomalies of the 1957 Act" may not be wise, it didn't address itself to the question of whether it might be sensible to introduce a new Act in which the death penalty was restored for specific categories of crime.

Moreover, of the initial two assertions in the letter, the second was irrelevant to the question of deterrence. From the proposition, whether true or not, that murder and other crimes are traceable to complex factors, it does *not* follow—either logically or empirically—that increased severity or increased certainty of punishment will not reduce them. As for the first assertion, it is just not true. Contrary to persistent allegations (by many sociologists and by some criminologists) that capital punishment does not deter, recent econometric research, most of it done in North America, provides statistical support for the public's commonsensical view that it does reduce the incidence of murder.

## *10. Deterrence: The Simple Argument*

BEFORE SUMMARISING the recent evidence bearing on the deterrent effect of capital punishment, it is surely not straining credulity to suggest that unaided common sense provides the answer: that, other things being equal, the greater the punishment or its certainty, the greater

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[10] Of the total crimes committed in the country, estimates of the proportion that are reported to the police vary between 10% and 30%. Provided that the proportion actually reported to the police remains constant over the relevant time period, the *proportional* increase over time will be that given by the official reports.

Two factors, however, operate to understate the growth in the incidence of murder, numerical and proportional, given by official reports over the last few decades.

First, there is the tendency of the prosecution increasingly to charge the accused with "manslaughter" rather than "murder", in order to reduce the chance of his acquittal by the court.

Second, as Ernest van den Haag notes, the lives of a larger proportion of the intended victims of murderers are being saved today owing to advances in medical science.

[11] This ill-constructed sentence needs exegesis. The phrase "as soon as the country had become accustomed . . ." should properly read "as soon as the criminal element in the country had become accustomed. . . ." The sentence can then be seen to say that, in consequence of the lighter sentence, criminals would initially increase the number of murders. But once convinced that the lighter sentences would continue, they would start cutting back on the number of murders committed. Needless to say, such criminal behaviour would be inexplicably eccentric.

[12] A similar sort of letter to *The Times* written on 31 March 1987 (although on this occasion signed by no more than six persons headed by Robert Alexander, Q.C.) asserted that "There are only two arguments for the restoration of capital punishment: either that it satisfied society's desire for condign punishment . . . or that it deters." The subsequent statement of the signatories that there "never has been any evidence to suggest that capital punishment deters" is, as I shall indicate later, simply the result of ignorance of the intensive research being undertaken by economists and published in journals which the signatories presumably never read.

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the deterrence. (The complementary proposition—equally obvious and, incidentally, more generally accepted—is that the greater the reward the greater the exertion.)

Economists as a whole subscribe to the first proposition, which is an instance of the Law of Demand—one of the few dependable empirical generalisations to be found in the science. The Law of Demand posits a negative relationship between the price of a thing and the amount of it demanded. Applied to crime, it would read: a rise in the cost of crime (that is, an increase in the severity or in the certainty of punishment) would reduce the amount of it, other things being equal. We might well exclaim: why bother to invoke the law of demand! Does any one really doubt that if the law decreed that a person found guilty of stealing should have his hands cut off, the number of thefts in that country would fall precipitately?—the more so, the greater the certainty of arrest and conviction!

No exemption for crimes of passion need be anticipated. Under provocation people do indeed become so enraged as to commit acts of violence. And having done so they will, of course, plead "loss of control". But this phrase may not be taken to mean that their actions at the time were being controlled by some external agent. Neither can it mean that people give no thought to and have no idea whatever about the savagery they are about to perpetrate or are actually perpetrating. At all events, were the penalty for a crime-of-passion murder changed to that of being boiled in oil, or something equally dreadful, we should soon, surely, have evidence of people's powers of self-control.

But, in our wonderful scientific age, who will be satisfied with mere common sense? Recalling the prolonged investigations of the Eisenhower Commission into the causes of violence, one begins to despair of a civilisation that believes it necessary to consult scores of leading scholars, to operate high-powered conferences, to set up arduous working sessions, to amass 460 pages of hearings and, after much cogitation and collation, to produce a ponderous report of over 600 pages[13]—for what purpose? Simply to determine whether exposure of children to repeated scenes on the media of every variety of brutality—of sexual assault, torture, and murder—might, over the years, produce harmful effects on the young.

Apparently there is nothing for it then but to comply with the ritualised requirements of our science-based civilisation; in this instance, to adduce the sophisticated statistical evidence that is held to be essential before we may repose any confidence in what ought to be patently obvious.

If the only evidence available were casual and limited, a thoughtful person would avoid comparing crime rates as between communities living in different periods and circumstances, even where (as seldom is the case) the statistics being compared are equally reliable. Such a person would seek rather to restrict his observations to a given country at a given time. Without any statistical training he might note, for example, that the proportion of all murders committed by the under-eighteen age group in the United States today is exceptionally high. But then, as he will know, the law there is exceptionally lenient to murderers under the age of eighteen. Such information may not be taken as conclusive evidence of the effective deterrence of punishment, but it is striking enough to create a presumption in favour of the deterrence thesis.

Even if there were no evidence whatever, the open-minded legislator may incline toward capital punishment when he is persuaded to compare the consequences of being mistaken—in contrasting ways—about its efficacy. As Ernest van den Haag makes clear, such a comparison involves us in a choice between two alternative consequences, each resulting from one of the two possible errors. Thus, if capital punishment is introduced in the *mistaken* belief that it deters, the lives of *convicted murderers* are lost. If, on the other hand, capital punishment is abolished in the *mistaken* belief that it does not deter, then *innocent* lives are lost.

In the absence of any knowledge whatever of the efficacy of capital punishment, the consequence of committing the first (the retentionist's) error is surely more acceptable than the consequence of committing the second (the abolitionist's) error. And if so, regard only to social justice would suggest that, until such time as there is general agreement about the efficacy or otherwise of capital punishment, the death penalty for murder should be retained. Otherwise we shall be, indeed we are, taking the risk of losing innocent lives so as to make sure we do not lose any guilty ones.

As it happens, we are not merely *taking a chance* of losing innocent lives. We are quite certainly *losing* innocent lives, in order to spare those of convicted murderers, since the mounting evidence gives strong support to the deterrent thesis.

[13] The Commission of thirteen members, of which Dr Milton Eisenhower was chairman, was set up by President Lyndon Johnson in an executive order on 6 June 1968. *The Final Report of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence* was published by the US Printing Office on 10 December 1969. This *Final Report* is the summary and conclusions of the special reports and the hearings as set forth in more than fifteen volumes resulting from the research, detailed data, and expert opinions of some 200 leading scholars in the US, and the supporting staff of the Commission.

The report entitled *Mass Media and Violence* is Volume 9 in the series and runs to 614 pages (including eleven appendices), drawing on hearings and appendices in the 463 pages of Volume 9A.

The broad conclusions of Volume 9, summarised in the *Final Report*, is that the preponderance of evidence suggests that violence on television and cinema programmes does indeed have adverse effects, especially on child audiences, inasmuch as children learn from what they observe. To growing children in America, particularly those of working-class parents, television drama—where violence is rarely presented as socially unacceptable—is their vision of the adult world. Many of these children, the *Report* stated, spent more time in television-viewing than at school.

## *11. Deterrence: Vindicating the Economic Hypothesis*

It is no secret within the social sciences that among sociologists, particularly in Britain, and to a lesser extent also among criminologists, there is a general presumption that punishment does not deter, or does not deter very

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much; whereas among economists the general presumption is that punishment does deter.

The economists' presumption springs from extending the Law of Demand to criminal activity, measuring its cost to the (potential) criminal in terms of the certainty and the severity of the punishment. The response to an increase in this cost may or may not be high, but if the Law is valid the *direction* of change—a reduction of crime—must result.[14]

The extension of the Law of Demand to crime has met with a number of objections by non-economists.

*1.* In the first place, it is contended that what really matters to the criminal is the likelihood of his being sentenced to a given term of imprisonment, and this depends upon the probability of his being convicted of the crime, which in turn depends upon the probability of his apprehension. According to the economists' formulation, however, an increase in the severity of punishment acts to reduce a particular sort of crime, *provided* the probabilities of the criminal being apprehended and convicted remain the same. Not only is the economist aware of these variables; his research is expressly directed toward calculating a coefficient of response for each of these two probabilities that—taken together with the expected (average) sentence for that category of crime—reveals the probability of his actually receiving that sentence.[15]

*2.* In the second place, it is occasionally remarked that the criminal is unlikely to know much about these probabilities or even about the "average sentence" of imprisonment for the crime being contemplated. No academic economist is so unworldly as to believe that all potential criminals spend their spare time reading official reports or working out the relevant odds. Criminals do, however, read about crime in the newspapers, and the more experienced among them have a pretty shrewd idea of the chances they are taking and of the likely term of imprisonment if they are convicted. Professional criminal gangs certainly make it their business to know if more or fewer police are being assigned to a particular vicinity or to a particular kind of crime, and they modify their plans accordingly.

*3.* Finally, the point is sometimes made that the response of the criminal to an increase in punishment is too slight to matter. The short answer to this objection is that it is vacuous. Economists recognise that for each individual there is some interval of price-change over which there is no response: only when the change in price exceeds some *minimum sensible* will the individual adjust. Thus, it may be that an increase in the average sentence for murder from 10 years to 11 years may be too small to increase the deterrence to murder, whereas an increase from 10 years to 30 years imprisonment is likely to have a quite perceptible effect. Needless to say, not all criminals will react in the same degree to an increase in the penalty for a particular crime. Many "amateurs" may not react at all. But it is enough that in reaction to stiffer penalties some proportion of the criminal population responds (though in varying degrees) for a reduction in crime to be registered.

I should add that even among professional economists there still remains a small minority who do not subscribe to the general belief that crime is significantly responsive to punishment, in particular to capital punishment. These few have chosen to reserve judgment and to take a somewhat hypercritical view of the statistical findings of the majority of economists working in the field of crime. This is as well, since such findings then become subjected to continued and searching scrutiny, as a result of which both the data and the methods of researchers are refined and their conclusions made more widely acceptable.[16]

[14] As every economics undergraduate knows, passing mention is made in economics textbooks of what is known as "the Giffen paradox"—the theoretical possibility that if an item takes up an inordinately large proportion of a person's total expenditure, the amount demanded may actually decrease in response to a fall in price.

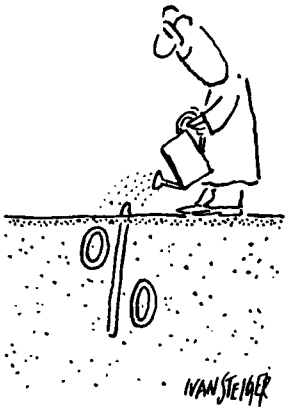
This is because the resulting saving may induce people to substitute for the good in question others of "better quality". This theoretical possibility cannot, with any pretence at plausibility, be extended to "the demand" for crime.

[15] It may be important to bear in mind that the *risk* of arrest is not indicated by the number of arrests in a given neighbourhood. A significant decline in the number of arrests that follows more effective police activity there, is consistent with a greater risk of arrest.

[16] It must not be supposed, however, that enquiry into the deterrent effects of punishment necessarily requires a high order of technical expertise. Simple experiments can sometimes be very suggestive. For example Ernest van den Haag quotes the details and results of experiments conducted with a random sample of students who had opportunities for cheating in examinations. The experiments showed (*a*) that exhortations to honesty were worse than useless; (*b*) that threats of punishment were effective, especially when credible; and (*c*) that cheating was least resisted by those who stood to gain most from it.

[17] In a 1968 paper, the sociologist Jack Gibbs, though using simpler statistical tools than those commonly used by economists, none the less concluded that punishment did indeed appear to deter crime. His paper apparently provoked five other sociologists (Gray, Martin, Bean, Cashing, and Tittle) into further research, in the attempt to prove that Gibbs was wrong. In the event, they all ended up agreeing with his results (the references are given by Tullock in his *Public Interest* article).

## *12. Deterrence: The Evidence*




SINCE ABOUT 1960, economists have been busy formulating and testing the deterrence hypothesis against the data, with special reference to capital punishment. As Gordon Tullock has remarked (in *The Public Interest*, Summer 1974), the earlier studies by sociologists in the 1950s, which seemed to show that punishing criminals had little effect on their behaviour, were, statistically speaking, very primitive. Only later did a number of American sociologists conclude that the "evidence" from such studies was untenable. They were honest enough to publish their revised findings, which lent support to the deterrence hypothesis[17]—although (according to Tullock) they encountered difficulties in getting their work accepted by the popular sociological journals.

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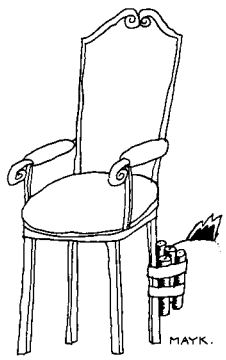
One of the first statistical tests made by economists was that of Christine Leikowitz of Columbia University in 1965. She was a student of Gary Becker, whose seminal formulation of an economic theory of crime and punishment (first published in Chicago's *Journal of Political Economy* in 1968) was the precursor of a steady stream of economic studies on the subject, both theoretical and empirical. Using cross-section data from the different states in the US, she discovered—after allowance had been made for other relevant factors—that the states with more severe penalties had significantly fewer crimes.

Another of Becker's students, Isaac Ehrlich (today one of the foremost scholars in this specialised area), went over the same ground in his doctoral thesis, using more elaborate statistical methods. His findings, first published in 1973, vindicated those of Leikowitz. About the same time, the economist Michael Block, comparing the crime rates of different police districts in Los Angeles, also found clear indications of the deterrent effect.

These results were confirmed independently by the economists Llad Phillips and Harold Votey in 1969, by Phillips alone in 1973, and again by both writers in their textbook on the economics of crime in 1981.[18] Nearly all the later studies of the data in North America supported the deterrence thesis, as did a study of 1984, using Australian statistics.[19] In the meantime Isaac Ehrlich, addressing himself to capital punishment, concluded that it had an impressive deterrent effect when the alternative penalty for murder was life imprisonment.[20] His equations suggest that the execution of a single condemned murderer in the United States would prevent between eight and twenty additional murders. Admittedly, the data were not always as abundant as they might have been, and the studies of other economists have put smaller figures on the numbers of preventable murders per execution. For instance, another researcher in this field, Kenneth Wolpin, using the crime statistics for England and Wales over the period 1894 to 1967, estimated that each execution in Britain might be expected to prevent, on average, just over four additional murders.[21]

Econometric research in the area of crime and punishment continues unabated, with economists seeking to strengthen their models and to enhance their predictive accuracy. A highly fastidious statistician might be inclined to dub "fragile"[22] the structure of the elaborate models used by Ehrlich, Phillips, Wolpin, and other economists. Yet he would have to agree that econometric studies lend no support to the contention of the abolitionists that punishment has no deterrent effect. He would also have to agree that, if one gave equal weight to every one of the econometric studies that has been done since 1965, the magnitude of the deterrent effect of capital punishment would lie along a range varying from weak to powerful, with most of the findings scattered along the latter end of the spectrum.

## 13. Dealing with Terrorism




TERRORIST MURDER is a more perplexing phenomenon than criminal murder. Our historical experience of it is limited, the statistical data are insufficient, and our intuitive judgment is less reliable a guide than it is in the case of ordinary criminal murder. Yet it is too topical a subject to ignore and there is, in any case, a stronger temptation to advocate the execution of terrorist murderers. In terms of retributional justice, the warrant for the death penalty is undoubtedly stronger. If a terrorist kills in order to escape arrest, or on impulse and under provocation, such killings are merely incidental to his aims. It is his chosen vocation to murder: he murders on principle, seeking to despatch all "enemies of the people" identified by the leaders of his organisation. As a professional assassin, he may be required to kill and torture wholly innocent people, and in planting explosives in public places he kills and injures at random.

The warrant for the death penalty is also stronger when we turn to the practical question of protecting the public from terrorist attack, and gains in strength from the shaky arguments of abolitionists. Thus, a letter to *The Times* (30 October 1983) took the view that the introduction of the death penalty into Northern Ireland, apart from encouraging martyrdom, would only lead to hostage-taking and reprisals, as happened in Palestine under the British Mandate. The flaw in the argument is the obvious one that terrorists in Palestine —or anywhere else for that matter—would have no qualms about reprisals or taking hostages in order to blackmail the authorities, irrespective of the penalty for murder. Certainly, sentencing the captured terrorists to life imprisonment rather than execution would not have deterred them.

Nevertheless, current disquiet about the manifest vulnerability of the public to terrorist activity justifies some further reflection on the oft-repeated allegation that executing terr-

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[18] Llad Phillips and Harold Votey, *The Economics of Crime Control* (1981).

[19] See G. Withers's paper in *The Economic Record*, June 1984.

[20] Ehrlich's most frequently cited papers on the subject are those published in the *American Economic Review*, June 1975, and in the *Journal of Political Economy*, August 1977.

[21] The best known of Wolpin's papers on this subject are two in the *American Economic Review*, June 1975 and May 1978, the latter being an elaborate summary of his research into the British statistics; he covers some of the ground in his article "Crime and Punishment in England and Wales, 1894-1967", *Journal of Political Economy*, October 1978.

[22] As indeed does Edward Leamer in his 1983 article in the *American Economic Review*. He points out, perhaps unnecessarily, that by disregarding social factors that are believed by the researcher to be of slight consequence (but which may be thought important causes of crime by another researcher) it is possible to generate results comformable with one's prejudices.

What is striking, however, is that, despite the parade of scepticism, the application of Leamer's general equation (in which all the conceivable variables he mentions are included) to the available data reveals that there is about a 90% chance that the murders prevented by a single execution in the United States is a number lying between six and twenty.

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orists for murder rather than sending them to jail will create "martyrs", and so strengthen terrorist organisations. Such allegations do not stand up to scrutiny.[23] The population at large certainly does not believe that the death penalty is too harsh a punishment for terrorist murder, and is therefore more likely to be gratified than upset if a terrorist is executed. There are sympathisers, of course, to be found at the fringes of all terrorist organisations. Yet they are, in any case, already prepared and often eager to take risks in order to help the movement in a variety of ways. It is not at all obvious that many would decide to take the fateful step of themselves becoming active terrorists just because any captured member of the illegal group were to be executed for murder rather than imprisoned. It is much more likely that over time the morale of the active sympathisers would be better sustained by the knowledge that their heroes were alive in prison, and with fair chances of escape, than by the knowledge that their heroes were all dead and buried.[24]

As for hostage-taking, it was argued during the 1983 debates in the House that the death penalty would actually provide an incentive to a terrorist hijacker to kill more than one hostage since, no matter how many he killed, the penalty would still be death. This is not in the least convincing, since the same may be said of life imprisonment. No matter how many hostages the hijacker kills, he will only get a few more years, or at most life imprisonment—to say nothing of his hopes of release or escape.

The popular image of the terrorist as a quite fearless fanatic is at odds with the facts. Putting aside the kamikaze pilot or the driver who seeks to ram explosives into military objectives, many incidents over the past few years have shown how quickly hijackers lose their nerve when their plans go awry and the authorities are determined and resourceful. When terrorist demands continue to be rejected, they do not (as they threaten to do) blow themselves up along with all their hostages. They compromise; and they often surrender.

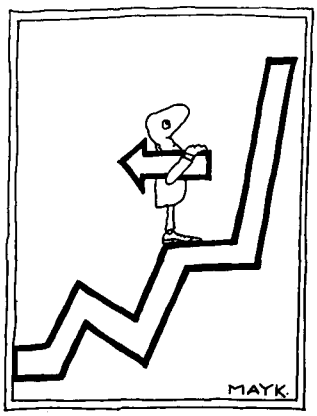
The critical question we are left with, therefore, is whether terrorists would in the last resort kill more hostages or more innocent people if the penalty for terrorist murder were execution rather than life imprisonment.

Let us be candid enough to admit that the question cannot be answered with any degree of statistical confidence since sufficient data have not been accumulated. But reason alone can take us far enough. For though we may be unsure of the deterrent effect on such killers, we can be pretty sure, for two related reasons, that the death penalty will act to reduce the number of innocent people murdered.

*1.* The first reason, similar to that mentioned earlier in connection with ordinary criminals, is that the execution of the killer forecloses the possibility of escape or later release from prison, and therefore of the opportunity of perpetrating additional crimes—this being all the more likely in the case of ideologically-motivated killers.

*2.* Secondly, the longer the time the convicted terrorist remains in prison, the greater is the opportunity, and the temptation, to try to free him by one means or another, commonly by the capture of hostages in a bid to blackmail governments. Such attempts, whether successful or not, are likely to result in the death of some of these hostages. And, in so far

## *Vox Populi*




**Four out of five people want hanging brought back for child murderers and sex and terrorist killers. Marplan questioned a sample of 1,394 adults, aged over 18, in 103 randomly selected constituencies across the country.**

**The Government has blocked a move to hold a national referendum. Mrs Thatcher, who is for hanging, and Home Secretary Douglas Hurd, against, believe that Parliament rather than the people, must decide.**

Hanging *was abolished in 1965 and a succession of Parliaments since then have voted against its return.*

*In the Marplan Poll, more men than women, more Northerners than Southerners, and older rather than younger people favoured capital punishment. And more working class than others would opt for its return if there was a national vote.*

*Just 12% favoured an alternative execution to hanging, such as injections or gassing. In fact 69% would oppose the death penalty if it involved a method other than the gallows.*

Following Mrs Thatcher's **second election victory in 1983, there were six decisive votes in the Commons against hanging, for various categories. The majorities against were: all murderers 145; terrorists 116; killers of policemen 81; prison officers 96; murder by shooting and explosion 164; and during a robbery 175.**

**The last Commons vote on the issue (in April 1986) followed the same pattern. Hanging was rejected by a 112 majority.**

A move to *get the death penalty restored for "evil murder" fell earlier this year [1987].*

*64% of people questioned in the Marplan Poll backed the rope for all types of murder; 28% were against, with 2% abstaining and 6% undecided.*

*But in the worst category, involving child, terrorism and rape victims, 81% favoured hanging with only 15% opposed.*

*Marplan Poll*
*(November 1987)*

[23] The rhetorical point made by the Secretary of the Police Federation in his letter to all Members of the House in July 1983 is worth citing even though it is not strictly relevant. He rejected the view that executed terrorists would become martyrs—the real martyrs, he said, were the thousands of victims whose murders went unpunished.

[24] The statement made by an IRA chief, and quoted by an abolitionist, that the death penalty would *not* act as a deterrent, when regarded as evidence against capital punishment seems evidence rather of sublime innocence.

If the IRA really believed that the death penalty would create martyrs and so bring recruits into their movement, they would surely give every encouragement to its restoration.

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as they are successful, the rescued killers are once more at liberty and available for future terrorist attacks.

The swifter, therefore, the execution of the captured terrorist killer, the smaller his chance of rescue or escape; and the smaller, consequently, the risk of further deliberate or accidental murders.[25]

## 14. Some Conclusions

IN THINKING ABOUT the moral propriety of the death penalty for murder, it is helpful, provisionally, to banish the nagging thought that an innocent man may be executed: that is, to assume provisionally that there is no doubt whatever of the guilt of the convicted person.

For the dread of an erroneous execution exerts an inordinate influence on people's minds, even among those who recognise that the chance of this occurring is slight. But it just will not do for abolitionists to surrender judgment to such maxims as "Better twenty guilty men go free rather than one innocent man be punished". For the plain fact is that abolition of the death penalty necessarily entails losses of life also, and of innocent lives at that. Careful assessment of these respective risks is likely to show that the latter exceed the former.

Second, even if the reader is not disposed to rank retribution before other social considerations, he should at least acknowledge that the desire to see justice done is one of the abiding aspirations of all forms of society. The public's desire for harsher punishment for crimes of violence is, I believe, to be attributed in the main to this desire.

The continued search for Nazi war-criminals, for example, is not animated by any hope of producing a deterrent effect. It is inspired by an unquenchable desire to avenge the pitiless murder of millions of innocent people. And the declared policy of the Israeli government—one that has earned it some grudging respect in countries of the West—is that of exacting retribution, of striking hard at terrorist groups whose members attack and kill Israeli nationals, whether or not it deters them.

Indeed, the pursuit of retributive justice is a theme of much of our heritage of legend, fable, saga, romantic drama, ballad, poetry and, of course, fairy-tales. Far from being an ignoble impulse, it is quintessentially human. A man whose concern and compassion extend as far as mooting therapies for the hapless criminal and little else is likely to be so psychologically disoriented as to constitute a positive menace to society.

Third, the assertion that lawful execution of an assassin is a "barbarous" act is, of course, to be deprecated. Its rhetorical appeal may, however, be explained to some extent by abolitionists' associating the death penalty with hanging or electrocution. But it is quite feasible and perhaps desirable to adopt other forms of execution—such as lethal, though painless, drugs or gases; or, for that matter, permitting the condemned person a choice in this respect.[26]

Fourth, and turning to the pragmatic aspects of the problem, the trend toward more lenient sentences since World War II may possibly have been encouraged by the unfortunate fact that the surge in crime resulted in prisons overflowing with inmates: a case of "no room in the jail". But excessive clemency toward malefactors has a demoralising effect on the police, who often risk—and sometimes lose—life and limb in their efforts to bring dangerous criminals to justice.[27] It also acts directly to undermine the faith of the public in the system of justice, and therefore to diminish its cooperation in maintaining law and order.

The close relations of a victim of brutal assault may be tempted to take the law into their own hands or, worse, to seek the services and cooperation of professional assassins or Mafia-type organisations. Even the sentence of "life imprisonment", which today averages about nine years, may look lenient to the parents of a child who has been raped, assaulted and murdered.

Fifth, even those who persist in denying any deterrent effect as unproven cannot properly claim that reason impels them to support abolition. For if complete uncertainty about the efficacy of the death penalty is assumed, the consequences of adopting abolition (if it transpires that the death penalty does in fact deter murder) are far worse than the consequences of adopting the death penalty (if it transpires, instead, that the death penalty does *not* deter). In the former case, innocent people will lose their lives. In the latter only guilty people lose them (instead of suffering imprisonment).

Sixth, admittedly the *statistical* evidence so far has not established the deterrent effect of capital punishment *beyond all possible doubt*, though it seems to be on the way to doing so. In the meantime, its efficacy can call upon strong support from common sense and experience, from casual observation and experiment, and also, over the last two decades or so, from the highly sophisticated econometric studies of economists. If only one murder were prevented for every criminal that is executed—which is far smaller than any of the estimates in any of the econometric studies supporting the deterrence hypothesis—it would require a perverse sense of justice to persevere with abolition, to sacrifice an innocent life in order to save a criminal one.

Seventh, what of itself is enough to breach the abolitionist defences is that the death penalty undeniably prevents murder even if it has little or no deterrent effect; that is to say, even if the knowledge that they would be executed did

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[25] Some have argued that it is "far more economical" to execute the killer than to maintain him in jail until his release or escape. Taken by itself, this would be a cold-blooded calculation. But when, as I argue, execution of the murderer is likely to result in the saving of innocent lives, the resulting "economy of resources" may be thrown into the balance as a bonus.

[26] Of the 37 states in the United States that have maintained, or restored, the death penalty, 25 now offer the condemned murderer a choice of the method of his execution.

[27] It is frequently alleged that imprisonment, especially for burglary, offers the criminal opportunities for improving his "vocational" skills and forming useful alliances. Where this is the case, the allegation cannot be accepted as a criticism of imprisonment as a penal institution, but as a criticism of particular prison arrangements. Such opportunities could be denied the prisoners, though at some additional cost, by segregating the inmates, ideally one to a cell, and having prison officers present wherever and whenever prisoners congregate for work or recreation.

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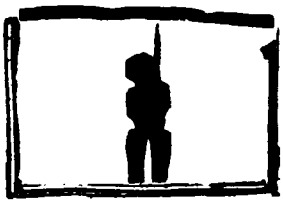
nothing at all to discourage potential murderers. For of the number of killers sent to prison, a proportion will commit additional murders either within the prison or after being released from prison (or after having escaped from prison)—a proportion that will be high for killers who are ideologically motivated. Bearing in mind the figure put forward in 1987, by Geoffrey Dickens, MP, of more than 30 persons killed by convicted murderers released from British prisons since abolition in 1965; it would be interesting to estimate the world figure over the same period for murders that would have been prevented had the death penalty for murder been universal.

## *15. Final Reflections*



THE RAPID GROWTH in crime over the last decade has many explanations in addition to the decline in religion and family life, and the related spread of the permissive ethic. Technical innovations which have (on conventional economic indices) raised living standards throughout the West have also changed our institutions, our style of living, and our modes of behaviour in ways that make crime easier and more profitable—indeed, more acceptable—than it was before World War II.

To give an example: before the War, homes were usually occupied during the day by housewives, by servants, by grandparents and other relations. Today both parents, or the single parent, can be working even when their children are very young, their homes being left empty from morning to late afternoon. More generally speaking, the greater number of homes today are owned or rented by working persons, or shared by young people of working age, and remain unoccupied for most of the daylight hours during weekdays. This change in mode of living is of inestimable value to burglars.

Again, innovations such as the automobile and television, once they have become popular, tend to keep people off the streets at night in surburban areas, which makes it less risky for street thugs.

Moreover, the footloose city-dweller has no commitment to the neighbourhood in which he resides and is unable to count upon the support of a community if he is being harassed or attacked by malefactors. It is not surprising, then, that he is disinclined to "get involved". Many people today who see a crime being committed before their eyes are more likely than not to turn their heads the other way. The crime may be a brutal one, yet they may hesitate even to inform the police or to become witnesses lest they or members of their family be victimised. This is only one of the many unfortunate ways in which behaviour has altered since the War.

Such changes have contributed to and been supplemented by other developments: by a rise in international terrorism, operating largely within the Western democracies, and by the political and sometimes illegal activities in Western countries of rival factions, including those of immigrants. As I write, two Iranian exiles have been murdered in London (September 1987) as an extension of the Middle East struggle between the Ayatollah Khomeini and his opponents.

In Britain, the strain on the resources and the morale of the police has been intensified by the scale of immigration from Asia and the Caribbean during the 1950s. Currently, scarce police resources have to be diverted from conventional crime to the thankless task of placating race antagonisms by operating a variety of schemes designed to better police relations with the new "ethnic communities", to say nothing of the occasional muster to battle with inner city violence and criminal hooliganism.

Compared with fifty years ago, then, we live much closer to the edge of violence. Inevitably we are made more acutely conscious of our vulnerability by startling media reports, by official warnings, by public-transport notices, by airport searching procedures, by cards placed in hotel bedrooms urging us to keep our doors locked at all times, warning us not to speak to strangers or mention our room number—and, of course, despite police efforts, by the insidious spread of "No-Go" areas.

No surer way can be found of destroying the amenity and the character of a community than by erosion of the underlying foundation of integrity and trust necessary to the normal functioning of its business and social activities. The attention now being given to making the public more acutely aware of lurking dangers, to introducing new monitoring and invigilating methods—and our consequent adoption of more ingenious devices and stratagems for self-preservation—makes for the creation of an atmosphere of perpetual anxiety which can blight our hopes for a better future. Indeed, it is just such an atmosphere of anxiety, distrust, and near-alarm that over the last 30 years or so has, for millions of Americans, already begun to turn the American Dream into something of a nightmare.

We have to recognise, then, that acts of violence—whose depiction has become one of the staples of television drama—have repercussions on society's well-being that go far beyond the suffering and distress of their immediate victims. Criminal violence can so intimidate and disrupt a community as to destroy the very possibility of a civilised life. Since the extent of the social damage inflicted by criminal violence far exceeds its immediate and perceptible damage, the punishment meted out to offenders should be drastically increased.

IF WE ARE TO BREAK FREE of the constricting spiral of fear and distrust which threatens to reduce us to a society of furtive fear-worn denizens who breathe freely only behind locked doors and bolted windows, we must hasten to reverse the rising trend of violence. And it would be far better if we could achieve this goal by a policy of drastically increasing the severity of penalties for crimes of violence. For should we fail to check the growth of violence in this way, continuing public alarm and dismay will eventually compel governments to cede to the police not only more powerful and sophisticated weaponry, but also enlarged powers of surveillance, search, and arrest—an outcome that will unavoidably diminish our personal freedom.

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# THEATRE

*Goldoni, Shaw, McKellen, Donizetti*

# The Pleasure Principle

## *By Edward Pearce*

The National Theatre in London has a mild and wholly sympathetic Italian prejudice, which is fine by me. But it goes against the British cultural grain for which the French and the Germans are cultural Cavaliers and Roundheads—wrong but romantic, and right but repulsive respectively. Kenneth Tynan hit them over the head with Brecht, Molière, and the costive French tragedies they did at school. Meanwhile the Italians are just a bunch of amusing acrobats with words thrown in, who can't expect to be taken seriously.

Happily, the company which gave us the Neapolitan pleasures of Eduardo De Filippo now gives us the *Villeggiatura* of Goldoni, the Venetian. *Countrymania*, as it becomes in this formal, rather dignified translation, is a vast piece, a trilogy of three 85-minute plays in straight sequence, four hours and 50 minutes in the evening, counting intervals—a ring cycle for fribbles. But Goldoni is not to be patronised or treated as an obscure antique continental classic on loan from the funeral parlour. *Countrymania* stands up better than most Molière, is in less need of director's props, and can run at that sort of lulling, lolling length and hold our attention.

The one pure minus of the evening is Ilona Sekacz's music. All first-year composition students can manage a part-song, but they usually keep such things in a desk drawer. Ms Sekacz's taped antiphonies, based on the cliché-Italian everyone knows from musical dynamics—*allegro ma non troppo* and so on—are as arch in concept as they are rhubarb to the ear. Why the National Theatre should have paid good public money for a tape of this dim little glee when Italian musical civilisation from Albinoni to Cimarosa is available out-of-copyright for the purchase of a £5.00 tape is the kind of question Conservative backbenchers would ask if they had heard of Cimarosa.

Never mind. This intrusive tosh apart, the production is studiously straight and unaffected, revolving towers behind, silk suits and chocolate-box dresses in front.

You stay with Goldoni and listen to him partly because he was free enough in decadent Venice to write middle-class theatre. Much could be made of the crumbling aristocracy and the superior wisdom of the servants. Don Leonardo and Paolino have their pre-echoes of Almaviva and Figaro. But this sort of case can quickly get out of hand—there is as much social comment in, say, Jonson and Massinger who are not precursors of anybody's social revolution. Indeed, later Goldoni, good and clear of the *commedia dell 'arte* trappings by 1761, had quite a lot in common with the City wits of the English 17th century. Like them, and unlike Molière, he is writing from a middle-class point of view about the upper classes, whom he regards as a bunch of incompetent clowns who need to be saved from themselves. Where Molière, himself a member of the middle class, was obliged at a toad-eating court to mock the bourgeois gentleman, Goldoni has the hapless Leonardo play the *drowning* gentleman: "We must go to the country because everyone goes to the country, and we must spend more money than we can afford because our house there is next door to Signor Filippo's and we must not be less grand than he is. . . ."

Nothing in life changes very much. Most of the first section is taken up with the purchase by Vittoria, Leonardo's sister, of the latest fashion of 1761, a dress called a *mariage*, the last grand carefree purchase of a bankrupt household, bought for the purpose of doing down Giacinta next door. When the air of 1988 is clangorous with the slammed doors of returned Porsches, the whiff of *Ecclesiastes* and all things under the sun is very strong.

Goldoni is a republican, as an irregular citizen of Venice should be. His reaction to the folly of the gentry is contemptuous and kindly. The country season of the better classes of Livorno, spent taking coffee and lime-juice and engaging in the *passeggiata* at Montenero, will come very nigh to ruining them. They are to be saved at the end by the intervention of middle-class values and Gladstonian finance. Fulgenzio (sweetly done by Russell Enoch) points everybody in a productive, non-parasitical direction by substituting for the cash dowry Filippo doesn't have, the neglected estate which a repentant Leonardo will work back to profit. Marriage is thus neatly made possible at the gates of bankruptcy by the opportunity of joining the middle classes (not a sentiment you could have expressed at the Court of Louis XIV).

What makes Goldoni work is the personalities he creates for his characters. Mark Rylance, in an outstanding performance as Leonardo, helps them along by injecting into his silken butterfly a touch of hysteria close to weeping, as of a man in an unresolved crisis of fever. These are not types of humours. Prick them and they bleed. James Smith's Filippo, sweetly warm and bumbling—perhaps the finest acting of the night—is Goldoni's man of decency. Though Ferdinando the sponger is a model of the eternal Italian horror, the professional beau, sociable, tattling, old woman-chasing, donation-demanding, everything rich American ladies over 50 learned to devour after 1947, Philip Voss does splendidly as a Charles Grey type without the ferocity, though he is a bit old for a gigolo.



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Sylvestra Le Touzel, who had a hard time with the awful Fanny Price for a TV version, comes good as Giacinta, shrewd-silly prisoner of woman's estimation of woman, teaching herself virtue from a written text like any modern with a paperback on psychology. Miss Le Touzel has a strong feel of the young Eleanor Bron, an erratic decisiveness, and a voice which moves about in sympathy. As a girl growing up, and horribly tempted by a second wooer, she gets well beyond the hand-wringing of convention.

In Goldoni, who watched and watered his characters along the filaments of his set plot, we take our pleasure from their interplay rather than from any devastating or flashing wit.

*Countrymania* grows on one across its great length. Life here is a smooth, ordered, 18th-century surface with cracks and fissures just below the veneering. But since the piece exists to please, it is wrapped up in a happy ending, which is psychologically sound because Goldoni has made his candidate for disaster at least pitiable if not sympathetic.

If Goldoni should be denounced as a friend of a modified status quo, his own experience suggests he was wise to be so. After transferring to Paris and the Théâtre des Italiens, he received a pension from Louis XVI which (with all the others intended for the Don Leonardos of France) was swept away by the Revolution. When the Jacobins realised whom they had left destitute, they at once restored the honoured writer's entitlements. By which time Goldoni, with a playwright's sense of timing, had died. He could have made quite a play about that!

The tiresome music apart, Mike Alfreds has given us a fine production, elegantly and sensitively done, treating the writer with a decent respect, getting the light laughs apt for such subtle comedy of character, and restoring the mid-18th century at a delicate point between old order and new rationality. It was wholly worth doing, and it was done exceptionally well.

PERFORMANCE IS more erratic at the Haymarket Theatre in Toby Robertson's Honours List version of George Bernard Shaw's *You Never Can Tell*. The Haymarket, which is to the modern concrete shell what a proper Victorian pub is to a Watney's formica-topped bar, can be a deadly place to perform in. It is shabby grand, and when—as so often happens—its management arranges performances from great names in their Philosan decades, the results can be musty and sad. If the unsteady and clumsy acting of Irene Worth were typical, this production could have been a disaster. Miss Worth has done fine things, but at the Haymarket she was systematically off-key and blurtatious, giving the impression of being alarmed by her own lines. Her performance may perhaps come right as it beds down.

No such reservations exist about Michael Denison, so often glossily debonair, a natural theatrical CBE. He has taken to playing Crampton as a gargling, R-rolling Scot in a permanent pet. It is a perfect delight of a performance, which the *tempo adagio* of the first half badly needs. This is a Wildean play, but not one so studded with epigrams that it can be lingered over. The arrival of the hip-shooting, galvanic barrister, Bohun (Derek Waring as a conversational blowtorch), doesn't come any too soon. This is easy, accessible, good-natured Shaw, but it shouldn't ever go slack. The prettiest of sets, confected from wrought iron, pot-plants and striped canopies by Saul Radomsky, cannot offset the deadly lethargy induced by Miss Worth; and the production as a whole gets no help from a blank and flavourless Valentine, played by Terence Wilton as an emotional blotter.

Frank Middlemass, who has been playing old men since late youth, does M'Comas lightly and astutely. But the life and soul of this sepulchre is for once the star. Vehicle productions organised for a grand old man are often a pain. The seasons Ralph Richardson ran at this rather reactionary theatre were not the happiest moments of that great man's career. But Michael Hordern, everybody's favourite senior classics master, handles the gentle, mock-servile William with perfect economy of display. Hordern is the Adrian Boult of the Theatre. Boult conducted with his wrists, deriding the descent from the cross of an ego-flouncer like Bernstein. So Michael Hordern acts with his eyebrows and for that matter with his voice, long on nuance and inflection. This star lives up to his billing and delivers a stream of subtleties, saving the day for the elderly-minded conservative management by being as good as his reputation.

AS GOOD OR BETTER than *his* is Ian McKellen, whose one-man show, *Acting Shakespeare*, has raised money and apparently saved a hospice for the victims of AIDS in West London. Among Shakespeareans, McKellen is a different kind of actor from his most-publicised rival, Anthony Hopkins. For all his high intelligence, Hopkins is stalked by rhetoric, vulnerable at all times to an orange-box amplification. McKellen represents the distillation of restraint (and in this show he prettily parodies the Lancashire schoolboy orating Henry V in his Cambridge interview, sending up the young McKellen very sweetly). He ambles about the canon, potting *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet* for us, and parodying Jonathan Miller, I think, with the Hamlet speech to actors as if delivered by a contemporary director to his cast. "Speak it trippingly on the tongue . . . , and I think you're all *marvellous!*" The whole evening is relaxed, humane, lightly conspiratorial. It is a tribute to a very old tradition of devotion to William Shake-

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speare, in which cause people like McKellen attempt to get him right.

The McKellen style, athletic without being gymnastic, cool, flexible, always playing the great parts from this side of perplexity, protects him from self-projection and heroic typecasting. There really isn't room for argument about the identity of our leading active-list actor!

One doesn't undertake in a theatrical review to judge singing and orchestral performances, but with the dramatic side of opera as controversial as it is, time should be found to say something affectionate about the Covent Garden *L'Elisir d'Amore*. It is the favourite vehicle of the taste-free Pavarotti, which should be held against it, but in fact this delicious Italian pantomime will always be fun if you play it affectionately. Covent Garden, weighed down across the years by the need to soothe ignorant rich patrons with big names *and* cut a spasmodic avant-garde dash, has here one of its few treasures (dating from 1975), which the incoming Jeremy Isaacs, late of TV Channel 4, must keep in the repertory. Conservative prettiness may have its limitations, but it suits Donizetti, a professional entertainer devoted to the pleasure principle.

Accordingly a childhood Arcady, like a fairy-tale pop-up book writ large, becomes the opera—as do sets in a medley of pastel greens, yellows and pinks. It is a performance which sinks into the arms of charm and enjoys itself. Providing you know what you are doing—and the designer, Beni Montresor, does—there are worse things than charm. This is one of the very few Covent Garden regulars whose revival warrants notice, and more than that, positive pleasure. It is nice to go the whole hedonistic hog.

## On Fire

When, on withering into life, smoke
chances on opacity, there

seems a kind of rock
cut from the sharpest energies

in fire: a compliancy, a pliant stone
of smoke, a broken form

turned blunt-end to the ground. . . .
Stoking-up, you flesh that sparse

contracted source. The flame-points swell
with wings and cobbled smoke.

Masking a fist, you weave—in half-burnt wood—
tuff of lichens to fissure in fire—

and stand away, watching how
the falling-up of heat

quarries air of flakes and finity.

A sculptor works less openly,
releasing stone in secret,

scraping through caves to find a captive,
hands like drills. The binds of stone

shrivel to his touch: a plying flame
as fumbles out of smoke. He makes

his fist a phoenix; hands he turns
are wings that clench a fire,

a beak that bites
is chisel in this stone. . . .

The warm wings lift
a trembling limb from rock;

a dust, like smoke, veers into air.

*David Morley*

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# LETTERS

## Joy & Hoi Polloi

OF COURSE Mr Francis Ebejer (Letters, ENCOUNTER, November 1987) may be technically right about the phrase "the 'hoi polloi'"; and I think everybody knows it, it's been said so often. But the liking for the expression came from the sound and not the sense. It has rhyme and metre. That's its charm.

Or maybe he isn't. Why can't we sometimes apprehend a set phrase as a unit? For consider: he likes the "der führer" approach to things, or he assumes his "il duce" posture. Or you can substitute "hoi polloi". In these if you leave out the article, you destroy the sense. In the other you destroy the feeling. Anyway saying "the 'hoi polloi'" is a lot different from saying "the the many".

So if I use it, I prefer to say "the 'hoi polloi'", pronounce it in the classical manner, and override the literal translation. Perhaps I show a "hoi polloi' nature (or "ousia") in doing the pleasing thing.

The last and best word on the subject is that of H. W. Fowler (2nd edition, revised by Sir Ernest Gowers). Here it is:

> "*hoi polloi*. These Greek words for the majority, ordinary people, the man in the street, the common herd, etc., meaning literally 'the many', are equally uncomfortable in English whether *the* (= *hoi*) is prefixed to them or not. The best solution is to eschew the phrase altogether, but it is unlikely to be forgotten as long as *Iolanthe* is played. '*Twould fill with joy and madness stark the Hoi Polloi (a Greek remark)*."

EUGENE DORFMAN

*New York City*

## The Battle of the Historians

DR JOSEF JOFFE (Letters, ENCOUNTER, September-October) challenges me to explain why Hitler attacked Russia, if Communism was never his main enemy. Communism was Hitler's great rival, as he saw it, and I have compared the two ideologies to massive vehicles contesting the same patch of ground—a sure formula for a collision. Hitler hated Communism for being similar—it appealed to the same sort of people, as he once remarked—and hence a deadly competitor to himself and his cause. I have never denied Hitler hated Communism: unlike Mussolini, he was always hostile to it. That is not a ground for doubting his own repeated assertion that he had learned almost everything from Marxism. Why should he avow such a debt, in conversation, if he did not have it? And why should one not learn from one's rivals and enemies?

I am asked why, if Hitler's exterminations were a reply to Lenin's, they were made against the Jews. The answer is that Hitler believed the Bolsheviks were Jewish, or Jewish-inspired. *Mein Kampf* says so repeatedly.

What did Hitler learn from Marxism? I suggest the doctrine of killing by category—killing not just one's opponents, that is, but entire classes and races. Marx and Engels, in texts I have already quoted in my book *The Idea of Liberalism* (1985), had proclaimed that socialism must be genocidal to succeed, and Marxist genocide was widely applauded by socialists in the last century and this, notably by H. G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw.

If Dr Joffe knows of any non-Marxist texts calling for genocide and acknowledged by Hitler as a source, as Hitler acknowledged Marx, let him tell us what they are.

GEORGE WATSON

*St John's College*
*Cambridge*

## Political Tourists

HAVING JUST RETURNED from a month in Czechoslovakia as an official guest of the authorities there, I was interested to read Paul Hollander's article, "The Strange Case Of Taiwan" (ENCOUNTER, July-August 1987), in which he explores "techniques of political hospitality", adopted by Soviet-bloc countries, which aim at enfeebling the critical dispositions of Western visitors.

I was one of 90 foreign students attending the Summer School of Slavonic Studies in Brno; and without doubt, the techniques of which Hollander speaks in his article were used—with what success I am not sure.

Firstly, we were looked after extremely well, and enjoyed a constant stream of more or less pleasant titillation. The food in the student canteen was excellent—"During the Summer School, it's the best restaurant in Brno", remarked one Czech friend. We received a generous amount of pocket-money—in total 850 crowns or nearly half an average monthly wage in Czechoslovakia.

Secondly, we were made to feel rather important. We were shown films that Czech citizens were no longer able to see—and while we were not told, for example, that the Hrabal film we were about to see had not been shown in Czechoslovakia since 1968, either we guessed because of the angry response of our director, who discovered that some of us had invited Czech friends along (we were subsequently issued with special passes as proof of our privileged status), or we discovered from Czech friends who, though envious, were not surprised. On our excursions, we were photographed and interviewed by the local newspaper and were able to read later of the accomplishments of the Brno Summer School in fostering "friendship between nations".

This is an example of political hospitality which endeavours to win the minds of gullible Western humanitarians who typically show more antagonism towards Americans than Soviets but it is also an important weapon in the ideological ritual of domestic control. We became a part of this ritual, the ideal stuff of political *kitsch*—a group of young visitors from the West mixing happily with their "Eastern" contemporaries, and overhead the dove of peace and friendship.

Thirdly, much of what we saw we were encouraged to see through socialist spectacles. Throughout, we were subjected to the interminably dull speeches of Party officials who (as Hol-

WE NOTE, *with regret and deep sadness, the passing of* ENCOUNTER *contributors and friends in 1987.*

DAVID WATT
JOHN LEHMANN
PRIMO LEVI
BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL
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lander puts it) spoke of quite ordinary utilitarian installations—roads, hospitals, reservoirs—as if they represented some "semi-sacred legitimating objects which prove the spiritual superiority of the political system". Every opportunity for self-congratulation is seized upon—indeed, this is part of what it means to describe such a system as totalitarian. The Party is incredibly greedy—it has, and is longing to tell you that it has, a finger in every pie. And so, for example, we are told in the guidebook to the Museum dedicated to the memory of Czechoslovakia's most popular composer that:

> "In 1978 a Leoš Janáček memorial was unveiled, thanks to the cooperation and moral support of political organisations and especially due to the cultural division of the Regional National Committee. . . ."

These self-conscious attempts to impress upon the visitor the benevolent achievements of Party policy in all areas of life frequently touch upon the absurd. The information sheet on the Punkevní Caves in Moravia reads as follows:

> "During the War, the caves served as a hiding place for the local inhabitants. In one of the caves called the Big Dog there even operated an illegal printing press. Thanks to the peaceful politics of the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community, it is now no more necessary to use the caves for such purposes."

We were taken to a collective farm where we were played a "promotional" video which verged on the utopian in its portrayal of life on the farm—a life of abundance, smiling faces, and happy cooperation, all accompanied by music which would have been suitable for any stirring Hollywood Western.

Finally, perhaps the most unsavoury aspect of the political hospitality we "enjoyed" in Czechoslovakia was a very explicit confrontation with the fact of Soviet hegemony. We took part in a wreath-laying ceremony which was supposedly in remembrance of Czech partisans murdered by the Nazis, but it was in fact used as an opportunity to praise "our Soviet liberators".

NICHOLAS SIMON

*London*

## "Iron Curtain"

IN THE December 1987 ENCOUNTER there is a clipping from the *Daily Mail* in your "Life & Letters" column alleging that the original author of the Iron Curtain phrase was Joseph Goebbels.

Not so, not at all so!

According to my file of usages, the Queen of Belgium used the phrase in 1914. In 1915 George Crile used it in *A Mechanistic View of War and Peace*. In 1918 Vasily Rozanov used it in *The Apocalypse of Our Time*. In 1920, Ethel Snowden used it in *Through Bolshevik Russia*.

I might add that in the *Talmud* it says: ". . . Nor can an iron wall [or curtain] separate Israel from God" (*Pesachim*, 85:2); and one of the prayers Jews recite on the seventh day of Sukkoth (Tabernacles) ends with a plea to the Lord to "remove the iron curtain [of our sins] between us and You".

As for Winston Churchill, before he used the phrase at the historic occasion in Fulton, Missouri (5 May 1946), he used it in a top-secret telegram to President Harry Truman on 12 May 1945.

LEO ROSTEN

*New York City*

# AUTHORS

**Andrew Davies** until recently taught English at the University of Warwick; he is now a full-time writer for theatre and television. His play *Rose* was put on at the Duke of York's Theatre in London in 1981. A second series of his television serial, *A Very Peculiar Practice*, starts on BBC 2 in February, accompanied by a book (published by Methuen), subtitled *The New Frontier*.

**Pamela Lewis** was born in Nottingham. She started writing in the mid-1960s, using her environment as source material. She has been consistently published and broadcast, and her poems appear in anthologies and a wide range of magazines. Her recent work includes *Cycle for a Centenary*, twelve poems specially commissioned for the D. H. Lawrence Centenary Festival in September 1985, and a cycle of poems on Byron which she is currently writing to celebrate the 1988 bicentenary. Her collection of poems *Admissions* was published last year by Littlewood Press.

**Jean-François Revel**, the French philosopher and critic, writes a regular column for *Le Point* in Paris. His most recently translated work, *How Democracies Perish*, was published in 1985 by Weidenfeld (London) and Doubleday (New York).

**Lucien Bodard**'s latest book, *Les Grandes Murailles*, was published last year by Grasset.

**David Holbrook**, Fellow and Director of English Studies at Downing College, Cambridge, is the author of numerous books, including *Lost Bearings in English Poetry* (1977), *Education, Nihilism and Survival* (1977), *Selected Poems* (1980), *The Leavises* (1984), *Authenticity and the Novel* (Vision Press, 1987), *Evolution and the Humanities* (Gower Press, 1987), and a novel, *Nothing Larger Than Life* (Robert Hale, 1987). His most recent novel, *Worlds Apart*, will be published this summer by Robert Hale.

**Anna Adams**'s recent collections of poetry are *Dear Vincent* (Littlewood Press, 1986) and *Trees in Sheep Country* (Peterloo Poets, 1987); a pamphlet, *Six Legs Good*, is published by Mandeville Press.

**Christopher Bigsby** is Professor of American Studies at the University of East Anglia. He is presenter of the arts programme *Kaleidoscope* on BBC Radio 4; his short stories and plays have been broadcast on both radio and television. His books include *David Mamet* (Methuen, 1985), *The Second Black Renaissance* (Greenwood Press, 1980), and the three volumes of *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama* (Cambridge University Press, 1982-85); he is co-editor of the Methuen Contemporary Writers series.

**Edward Pearce** is a columnist for *The Sunday Times*, and author of two volumes of sketches of Parliamentary personalities, *The Senate of Lilliput* and *Hummingbirds and Hyenas* (Faber, 1983, 1985). His latest book, *Looking Down on Mrs Thatcher*—published in 1987 by Hamish Hamilton—includes several of his ENCOUNTER articles.

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# *Life & Letters Today*

*London*

JUST DESSERTS: **Our front page photograph on Friday—of a building in Pasadena almost destroyed by the recent California earthquake—showed a crumbling wall inscribed with the remnants of a quotation:**

> *"'My . . . ', said T. E. Lawrence, picking up his fork."*

**Since then we have been inundated with readers asking what, exactly, did Lawrence of Arabia say when he picked up his fork? And why was it written on a wall in California?**

**We can now explain. The full quotation read:**

> *"'My people are the people of the dessert', said T. E Lawrence, picking up his fork."*

**It was painted on the side of a turn-of-the-century building by a local artist Paul Wiesick in the early 1970s. He thought the spelling of "*dessert*" was a tremendous joke. (Yes, quite.)**

**Indeed, in Pasadena it was regarded as such a whacky quip that when the owner of the building wanted to convert it from a car repair shop into an office-block this year, the Pasadena Heritage Society fought to preserve this example of Pasadena humour and the ancient, by their standards, 1900 façade.**

**The earthquake was the ultimate arbiter.**

*DAILY TELEGRAPH*

*Staffordshire*

ART & REALITY: *Violence flared for real during riot scenes staged by 200 actors and extras.*

*And when the director stopped the filming of a campus riot at Keele University, Staffordshire, for the BBC series "A Very Peculiar Practice", the fighting between students and actors continued.*

*'The students went berserk when they saw actors dressed as riot police", said an actress.*

*MAIL ON SUNDAY*

*London*

CIAO INGLESE! **Distressing news from Wimbledon. A Chinese restaurant is planning to serve Chinese fish 'n' chips as well as the normal junk food. The "Seafood Diner" will offer chips "flavoured with subtle herbs and spices" instead of the traditional dressing of vinegar and newsprint. This presents a grave threat to a fine institution. Everyone knows that the best English chip shops are all Italian.**

*LONDON EVENING STANDARD*

*Kentucky*

ST. NOWHERE: *A judge has ruled that the NBC television show "St. Elsewhere" must carry a disclaimer because its fictional story line has come a little too close to the truth.*

*Judge Edward Johnstone of Federal District Court in Louisville, Kentucky, also said, however, that the show's fictional hospital corporation called* **"Ecumena"** *did not sufficiently resemble* **"Humana Inc."** *of Louisville to warrant barring the show. The decision came in response to a request by* **"Humana"**, *which operates 86 hospitals, for a temporary restraining order on the grounds of trademark infringement.*

*A spokesman for* **"Humana"** *said the company would continue to pursue its suit, which seeks to prevent NBC from using the name* **"Ecumena".**

*The company was pleased that NBC would run a disclaimer at the end of each episode of the Emmy Award-winning series, which is set in a Boston hospital. The network said yesterday that the disclaimer would read: "Ecumena is a fictional company that does not represent any actual company or corporation."*

*The suit was not being brought out of concern that the portrayal of* **"Ecumena"** *would reflect poorly on* **"Humana"**. *In the show,* **"Ecumena"** *has purchased St. Eligius Hospital with the intention of making it more efficient and profitable.*

*NEW YORK TIMES*

*New York City*

QUOTEMANSHIP: **Tremendous research has gone into Steve Coll's book ("The Taking of Getty Oil: the Full Story of the Most Spectacular & Catastrophic Takeover of All Time", published by Atheneum, NYC). Still, Steve Coll, a reporter for "The Washington Post", ends with what's called a "biographical note", noting that many of his characters did not use the exact words we see in quotation marks in the book. He devotes a few pages to explaining this away, noting that "by employing a simple cosmetic device the journalist endows historical events with the feeling of truth—a feeling the reader intuitively appreciates."**

**Not this reader [Ray Brady writes]. If an author tells me somebody said something, I want to know that's exactly what he said.**

*INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE*

*London*

WORDS IN CHAINS: *Where did that hyphen come from? Mr Keith Waterhouse has been waging a brave campaign against the illiterate, intrusive apostrophe (and the illiterate missing apostrophe also). He should turn his attention to the hyphen. Except in conventional phrases like "well-worn" or "ill-bred" a hyphen between adverb and adjective has never been part of English punctuation [writes Auberon Waugh].*

*Now it is everywhere. Fleet Street sub-editors seem to be peculiarly addicted to joining words up. Here are random cases culled from recent editions of national—and "quality"—papers: "The* **highly-controversial** *reform of licensing . . ."; "Sally Beauman's* **sexually-explicit** *novel . . ."; "This* **embarrassingly-public** *settlement of the argument . . ."; "The* **badly-demoralised** *squadron . . . ."*

*I don't know how the fashion originated but I hope it can be stopped before whole sentences are linked in hyphenated chains.*

*SUNDAY TELEGRAPH*

*Tehran*

DEADLY ABC: **In the old days, Iranian primary-school children would learn their grammar in a textbook which taught them to recite: "*Baba ab dad, maman nan dad*—Daddy gave us water, Mummy gave us bread." A new edition of the volume has been published in Tehran in which the phrases have been changed. "*Baba khoon dad*" it says now. "*Maman jan dad*—Daddy gave his blood, Mummy gave her life."**

*THE TIMES*

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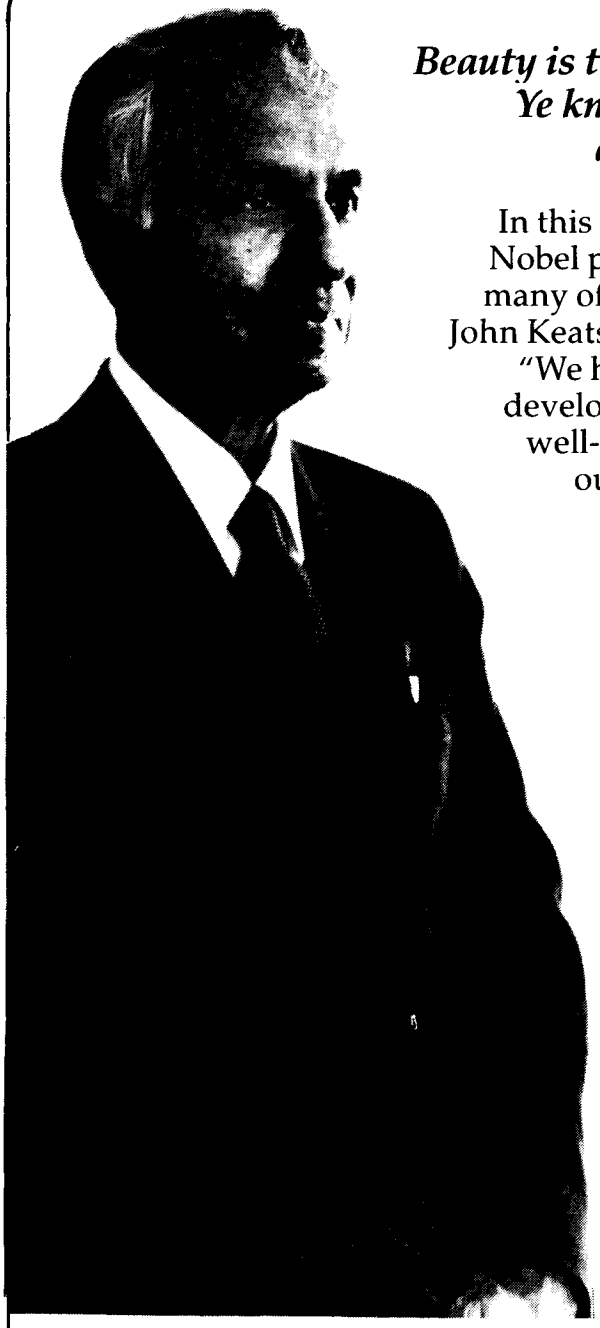

*Beauty is truth, truth beauty –that is all*
*Ye know on earth,*
*and all ye need to know.*

In this collection of seven lectures, the eminent Nobel physicist, S. Chandrasekhar, affirms that many of the greatest scientists have agreed with John Keats: truth and beauty are indistinguishable. "We have evidence," he writes, "that a theory developed by a scientist, with an exceptionally well-developed aesthetic sensibility, can turn out to be true even if, at the time of its formulation, it appeared not to be so." He gives many instances of the ways in which physicists have described their creative and aesthetic experiences: such as Heisenberg, on finding the key to quantum theory; Einstein, in developing his field equations; Wehl, in arriving at his gauge theory. Three lectures focus on the major figures of Milne and Eddington, and a 1946 lecture–antedating the others by thirty to forty years–illustrates how Chandrasekhar's own views have changed and developed.

**TRUTH and BEAUTY**
*Aesthetics and Motivation in Science*

# S. CHANDRASEKHAR

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